Table of Contents

1. Chapter 1 : Exil
2. Chapter 2 : Revelations and Plans
3. Chapter 3 : Last day and Unexpected help
4. Chapter 4 : Whitestorm and Barley's barn
5. Chapter 5 : The Journey begins...
6. Chapter 6 : The End of a Long Journey and Rescue
7. Chapter 7 : Skyclan !
8. Chapter 8 : Acceptance and Family Reunited
9. Skyclan Allegiance
10. Chapter 10 : Confession
11. Chapter 11 : Ceremonies and Surprise
12. Chapter 11 : New Deputy and Shocking News
13. Chapter 12 : Excellent News
14. Chapter 13 : Dovestar's Death
15. Chapter 14 : Banishment and Rise of a new Leader
16. ALLEGIANCE 2
17. Chapter 15 : Surprise from the Past
18. Chapter 16 : Shadows of the Past
19. Chapter 17 : Hard Decision
20. PLEASE HELP !
21. Chapter 18 : Decision
22. PLEASE HELP 2
23. Chapter 19 : Departure and Reunion
24. Chapter 20 : Tallstar and Leopardstar
25. Chapter 21 : Plans
26. Chapter 22 : Confrontations and Coming War
27. Chapter 23 : New Allies
28. Chapter 24 : War and Victory !
29. Chapter 25 : Aftermath
30. Epilogue

Chapter 1 : Exil

The Cats of Thunderclan were all in their Dens , resting their injured bodies after the terrible fight of earlier. Thankfully no one had severe wounds and would heal quickly.

Fireheart was laying on his nest in the Warriors' Den with a horrified look on his face. Earlier today , a large group of rogues attacked their camp and Bluestar, their Leader and his former mentor, died in the battle. He was unable to reach her because of their attackers but he knew who was responsible for this : their Deputy and the most trusted Warrior of the Clan , Tigerclaw.

The dark brown tabby tom with amber eyes had tried to kill Bluestar in the past but in vain....until now. Fireheart was heart-broken by his Leader's death but deep down another feeling consumed his heart : anger. He knew Tigerclaw was a traitor since his old friend Ravenpaw told him about what the dark brown tom did : during a fight with Riverclan for Sunningrocks, Tigerclaw killed their Deputy Redtail and told the Clan that it was Oakheart , Riverclan's Deputy, who did.

The brown Deputy then tried to get rid of his apprentice once and for all , but Fireheart and Graystripe helped him to reach Barley's barn where the black cat lived peacefully as a loner. Speaking of Graystripe, the gray tom was near his bright-flame colored friend with a look of sorrow on his usual joyful face. He still missed his forbidden mate Silverstream who died giving birth to their kits. Thankfully, Bluestar didn't banished him but his Clan-mates were still suspicious of the dark gray tom.

And now learning that their Leader was dead.... Every members of Thunderclan was horrified by the news as it was Tigerclaw himself who announced it. Right now the traitor was at the Moonstone to receive his nine lives . Fireheart growled at the thought of having *Tigerclaw* as Leader of Thunderclan and his growls caught the attention of his friend " Are you alright Fireheart ?" "No I'm not ! Tigerclaw killed Bluestar and now he is our Leader !" "I know... I

don't like it too..." the gray tom responded because glancing at the nursery.

The fire pelted tom seemed to know what he was thinking and he was a bit worried too : Bluestar accepted to let those kits staid despise being Half-clans but some of their Clan-mates disagreed with her decision....and Tigerclaw was among them. Now that he was Leader...What will happen to those innocent kits ?! Fireheart putted the tip of his tail on his best friend's shoulder before saying "Don't worry...No matter what will happen I will always be there for you..." Graystripe looked back at him with gratefulness and the two decided to rest for a bit. The fight from earlier had drained them of all their energies.

The two Warriors pressed their bodies against each others before falling asleep. Fireheart then found himself at Fourtrees and looked around before his green eyes landed on a familiar form approaching him. It was a pretty tortoiseshell she-cat with amber eyes who was once Thunderclan's Medicine Cat when Fireheart joined the Clan moons ago : Spottedleaf.

The happiness in his green eyes changed into one of sadness and when she was face-to-face with him, he spoke in a voice full of sadness " It is my fault....Bluestar died because of me !" Spottedleaf looked at him with sadness but still with a stern look *"No Fireheart the true responsible is Tigerclaw ! Not you !"* "You could have warned her about him ! " The Flame pelted tom spat angrily but the pretty tortoiseshell molly didn't even flinch at his tone *"Starclan's power is limited but if we had the possibility... we would have warned her..."*

Fireheart sighed , his anger disappeared completely, when suddenly, another form approached the duo and the fire colored tom was overjoyed to see Bluestar approaching them. The blue-gray she-cat seemed young again and her blue eyes looked at her former apprentice with a sad smile *"I should have listened to you when you told me your suspicions about Tigerclaw... Forgive me for my foolishness.."*

The Flame pelted Warrior looked at the blue furred molly with a calm look on his face "I forgive you... I understand why you didn't believe me in the first place..." Bluestar looked at him with a smile

before becoming serious again as a third form approached the bright-flame colored tom. It was another Starclan's cat but this one was different : it was a pale gray tom with white patches and blue eyes. Around him was an odor that Fireheart didn't recognized and his curiosity toward this stranger grew "Who are you ?" he asked him cautiously.

The strange tom looked at him before saying *"My name doesn't matter... I'm here to tell you that your journey had just begun"* "My journey ? What are you talking about ?" Fireheart asked him with a raise-brow of confusion " Your journey to find who you truly are..." the pale gray tom with white patches responded with gravity before the world around the bright-flame furred tom became nothing but darkness as a strange deep voice echoed those words :

' ***The Fire will lead the Sky to stop the evil Tiger '***

Fireheart woke up the second the strange voice stopped and he looked over to see Graystripe approaching him "Tigerclaw is back and called for a Meeting !" the gray tom announced with a bit of worry. The fire pelted tom slowly got up , stretching his body before following his best friend outside where the entire Clan was surrounding Highrock with Tigerclaw now Tiger*star* standing on it.

When the two friends were sitting among their Clan-mates , the dark brown tabby spoke "Cats of Thunderclan ! I received my nine lives from Starclan and I'm ready to take my rightful place as your Leader ! First of all, I chose Darstripe as my Deputy !"

At those words, the entire Clan congratulated the gray tabby with black stripes who seemed happy by being the Chosen one. Everyone was happy....except Fireheart , Graystripe and Cloudpaw , Fireheart's apprentice which was understandable.

Darkstripe hated Fireheart and his apprentice because they were 'filthy kittypets' while he disliked Graystripe because of his forbidden relationship with Silverstream. Fireheart and Graystripe looked at each other with disdain : they always knew that if Tigerclaw became Leader , he would surely pick Darkstripe , his most-devoted follower as his second.

Tigerstar waited for the Clan to clam down before resuming his speech " Now another subject had to be said : I feel that Bluestar, my predecessor, did many mistakes when she was our Leader and its time I rectify this !" Fireheart froze in fear at those words as his fur began to rise " First of all she shouldn't have allowed weak kittypets to join our Noble clan so Fireheart and Cloudpaw , you are banished from Thunderclan !"

At those words the Clan's yolwed in disagreement for their Leader's decision. Fireheart looked relieved that his Clan-mates were defending him "You can't do that ! They are good assets to our Clan !" Cinderpaw , Yellowfang's apprentice yelled loudly as she looked up at the dark brown tabby. Her Clan-mates mewled their agreement....except Dustpelt , Darkstripe, Longtail and Swiftpaw.

"My words is law ! I say they are banished and they won't be the only ones !" Tigerstar replied sternly before looking at Graystripe with sharp amber eyes "Graystripe you are banished as well for transgressing the Warrior Code !" Another yowls of disagreement echoed " **Silence !** As I said My words is law !" the dark tabby tom shouted to the Clan before glaring at Fireheart, Graystripe and Cloudpaw "You three leave our camp if you know what's good for you !"

Fireheart looked at Tigerstar with nothing but pure hatred before noticing the look in Graystripe's eyes : Worry. "Wait ! What about Graystripe's kits ?!" the bright-flame pelted tom asked loudly . Silence. All eyes were fixed on Tigerstar who seemed deep in thought After a moment of silence, the dark brown tabby tom spoke " You can take those filthy Half-clan kits with you ! I won't let them live in Thunderclan !" Then he looked at a certain Golden furred she-cat "Goldenflower ! Bring them here !"

The Queen entered the nursery before coming back with Stormkit and Featherkit who looked around with wide eyes. They had opened their eyes just before the fight with the rogues. Goldenflower licked them on their heads whispering in a voice full of sadness "Goodbye my loves..." as they mewled in confusion, the Golden Queen pushed them gently toward their father who nodded respectfully to the Queen.

"Now leave ! Before we make you !" Tigerstar ordered angrily but with an evil grin on his horrible face. Fireheart glared up at him with hatred but said nothing as he picked up Featherkit by her scruffs before walking toward the gorse tunnel. However, the moment the group was about to enter it, Cinderpaw's voice echoed "I will come with you..." Fireheart gently putted down his charge before looking at his former apprentice with sadness "No...The Clan needs you....Yellowfang needs you... take care of them..."

Cinderpaw nodded sadly and limped toward her mentor who looked at Fireheart with sadness in her orange eyes. As the bright flame -colored tom lowered his head down to pick up Featherkit again, another voice echoed " I'm coming with you !" He turned his head to see Brightpaw , Whitestorm's apprentice approaching the group. Cloudpaw approached her before asking "Why ?" " I want to be with you..." she responded shyly and the white apprentice smiled as he pressed his nose against Brightpaw's who purred.

Then she looked at Fireheart and the ginger tom could see the determination in her eyes "Alright if its your decision..." The young she-cat nodded before looking at her Clan-mates sadly. Fireheart picked up Featherkit and entered the gorse tunnel , quickly followed by Graystripe , Cloudpaw and Brightpaw. The gray tom was holding his son Stormkit by his scruffs and the kit was struggling to escape mewling in protest.

Fireheart was leading the group toward Tallpines where they stopped to take their breath. "What should we do now ?" Graystripe asked his longtime friend "I don't know... But we can't stay here..." The fire pelted tom responded with a sigh before Cloudpaw asked softy "I wonder what Princess will think about this ?" Fireheart looked at his nephew with a sad frown before an idea entered his mind "Maybe Princess can help us... " "How ? " Brightpaw asked from her sit next to her former Den-mate

"Maybe she know someone would could look for Graystripe's kits for a while ?" The Flame colored tom responded and his longtime friend looked at him with hopeful eyes " What are we waiting for for ? Let's go find her !" the gray tom shouted hurriedly which caused his friend's whiskers to twitch in amusement as he picked up Featherkit again before leading the group toward Two-leg Places.

The group approached Princess's garden and Fireheart gave Featherkit to Brightpaw , ordering his companions to wait before climbing on the fence and mewling "Princess ? Are you there ?" A minute passed and soon the brown and white molly appeared from the flap on the door. Her beautiful green eyes brightened when she saw her brother as a loud purr escaped from her throat "Fireheart ! Its good to see you ~" Princess purred as she and her brother embraced each other.

The bright-flame pelted tom looked at her with a smile "Its good to see you to Princess... But I'm not alone..." His sister looked at him with a titled head "Come with me...I will show you.." he inquired as he jumped away from the fence. After a moment of hesitation, she followed him and he leaded her toward his comrades. "Cloudpaw ! You are here too ! But who are you ?" The brown and white molly asked as her green eyes landed on Graystripe , Brightpaw and the kits at their paws.

"The gray tom is my best friend Graystripe....Don't worry he is nicer that he look..." this comment earned a playful glare from his best friend which caused him to chuckle "The White and ginger she-cat is Brightpaw..." The young molly shyly nodded in greetings "And those two are Graystripe's kits : Stormkit and Featherkit..." Princess looked at the two fur-balls with a warm smile "They are really beautiful Graystripe but where are their mother ?" At this question , the gray tom looked away with a pained look on his face "Did I say something wrong ?" Princess asked her brother and son with confusion.

Fireheart sighed before answering in a soft tone "Graystripe's mate , Silverstream, died giving birth to them..." "I see....I'm sorry for your loss" the white and brown molly whispered to the gray warrior who nodded respectfully at her. "So how are you all doing in Thunderclan ?" Princess asked with curiosity as she looked at everyone with curiosity.

Only silence met her words. Cloudpaw leaned against Brightpaw who gently licked his cheek in comfort while Graystripe and Fireheart both looked away with nothing but sadness. "We were banished from Thunderclan..." Fireheart responded softy after a moment of silence. "What ?! Why did they banish you ?! What

happened ?!" Princess asked them in shock at the revelation.

Fireheart sighed sadly again before responding" A group of rogues attacked our camp recently and Bluestar was killed... Tigerstar replaced her as our leader and he banished us...Me and Cloudpaw because we are not Clan-Born Cats ... and Graystripe because he had kits with a Riverclan's she-cat...Which is against the Warrior Code.... Brightpaw decided to come with us... "

"Its terrible... But what will you do now ?" Princess asked her brother who shook his head in despair " I don't know... But do you happen to know someone who can nurse Graystripe's kits for a while ?" he asked her with hope. The Brown and White molly looked deep in thought for a moment and then saw the hopeful look Graystripe was giving her "I'm sorry but I don't know any she-cats who can help you..." The gray tom's hopeful look deflected as well as Fireheart's "But...maybe our mother Nutmeg know someone ..." Princess added softy and everyone looked at her "How is she ?" Fireheart asked his sister eagerly earning a purr from Princess.

" I saw her recently and she is well thanks goodness ! " "Did she know about me not being a kittypet anymore ?" Fireheart asked with a bit of worry "No... I didn't think she would have loved to hear about you not being with owners..." his sister responded softy and the bright-flame colored tom nodded as he remembered that his mother never allowed them to stay away from their gardens or their owners back when they were still innocent kits.

"Can you bring her here ? We are not comfortable about entering Two-Legs place..." Fireheart began to explain but was stopped by his sister "Of course ! Wait here !" then she ran away , leaving the group behind. Graystripe approached his friend before asking gently "Do you think your mother will help ?" "I hope she will...." the fire pelted tom whispered as they waited for the brown and white molly to come back.

A few moments later, Princess came back but not alone. She was walking side by side by with a brown and white tabby she-cat who looked just like her. When the two mollies stopped , Princess pointed at Fireheart with her tail " Mother here is your son Rusty" The Older molly looked at her son warmly but then she frowned

"Where is your collar young cat ?" Fireheart looked at her with a smile "I don't live with Two-Legs now... I am a Wild Cat now...My name is Fireheart by the way... " he responded hesitantly.

Nutmeg's eyes were wide in shock "What ?! Why did you leave your Two-legs ?!" she asked her son with disbelief " Long story... " Fireheart sighed softy and Nutmeg calmed down before pressing her nose against her son's "Its good to see you again... but why are you here and who are they ?" she asked her ginger son as she looked at the others with sharp eyes.

"Here is my best Graystripe and his kits ! And those two are Brightpaw and Cloudpaw..." Fireheart pointed at each cat with his tail as he said their respective names. "Cloudpaw is my son~" Princess said to her mother who looked at her "You let your son living in the forest ?!" "I give him to Fireheart when he was still a kitten..." Nutmeg sighed deeply in frustration before looking back at her son "So why are you here ?"

Fireheart explained to his mother everything that happened since he joined Thunderclan. As he talked, Cloudpaw and Brightpaw were shocked to hear about Tigerclaw's true personality. When the flame pelted Warrior finished talking, Nutmeg staid silent for a moment. Then she looked at Graystripe's kits who mewled in hunger before saying "Alright I know someone who can help you... She was recently adopted by some Two-legs not too far from here... I don't remember her name but it was as strange as yours..."

"Can you lead us there Mother ?" Fireheart asked her after sharing a look with his group . Nutmeg nodded and leaded them toward a rather small Two-leg Den with a large garden full of bushes. As they walked ,Fireheart was holding Featherkit by the scruff on her neck while his best friend was doing the same with Stormkit. Cloudpaw and Brightpaw walking side by side behind them. Without thinking, Nutmeg passed though the flap on the door while the Wild Cats seemed hesitant about it. Princess looked at them as she was about to follow her mother "Don't worry...Nutmeg told me that the owners were away from some time so everything will be fine..." then she entered the house.

The Wild Cats looked at each others before slowly following her.

Fireheart was the first one to enter the house and when the group was fully in , they saw a beautiful cream furred she-cat with sky blue eyes laying in a basket. Against her soft belly, was a sleeping yellow she-kit was seemed as old as Stormkit and Featherkit. What surprised the Wild-Cats was the Molly's size : she was a bigger than them and was well muscled for a Kittypet.

Nutmeg mewled softy and this caught the molly's attention "Hi what do you want ?" the cream pelted Queen asked with suspicion clear in her eyes . After putting his charge down and gathering all his courage, Fireheart approached her and , when he was just in front of the cream pelted Queen , he spoke as calm as he could " I humbly ask for your help...My name is Fireheart.." the large molly calmed down a bit and mewled " I am Creampelt.... You are a Clan Cat , aren't you ?" "Yes...me and my friends were members of Thunderclan..." he responded softy with a nod.

Creampelt looked at him with curiosity " What do you mean you 'were' members of Thunderclan ?" With a pained look, Fireheart explained to her what happened during his time in Thunderclan. "I see.... Well , the Warrior Code state we should help ALL kits... I will nurse them..." Fireheart mewled a thanks to her before gesturing Graystripe to come over with the kits. His friend approached and gently putted his kits one by one against Creampelt's side. The two instantly went to nurse "They are beautiful..." The large molly commented as she gazed at the two nursing kits.

"Yes they are all I have left of Silverstream..." Graystripe whispered sadly which earned a sad look from Creampelt "I know how it felt to lose its mate... He was killed by a fox before those dawn Two-legs captured me..." "I'm sorry to hear that..." Fireheart whispered softy and Creampelt looked at him with a soft smile way warmer than earlier. Then Fireheart noticed that Nutmeg seemed off about something and slowly approached her, leaving the other two behind.

The fire pelted tom licked his mother's ears before asking in a concerned tone "Mother are you alright ?" The brown and white molly looked at her son with tearful eyes "Rusty...Fireheart...I have something to tell you... but please don't hate me..." "I would never hate you ! What is it ?" he inquired as he gently pressed his body

against her's in a comforting manner . Nutmeg staid silent for a moment but then she looked at her son with pure sadness. What she said, shocked him greatly.

"Fireheart... I think you deserve to know the truth...I'm not your true mother...."

(To be continued...)

Chapter 2 : Revelations and Plans

" Fireheart... I think you deserve to know the truth... I'm not your true mother... "

Fireheart looked at Nutmeg with nothing but pure shock as he heard those words "What do you mean you're not my mother ?! Of course you are !" he shouted a bit too loudly which caused everyone to look at the duo with surprise. Princess approached them and gently asked "What's going on ?" The fire pelted tom looked at his sister , still surprised "Nutmeg just told me she wasn't my mother..."

It was Princess's turn to be surprised as she looked at Nutmeg with wide eyes "Is that true ?" she asked the older molly with hesitation. Their mother sighed deeply in sorrow before responding "Yes its true... I adopted Fireheart when he was just a small kit... My Two-Legs brang him to him during a cold night..." Nutmeg's expression softened suddenly "You were so tiny and cute... mewling for milk.... I couldn't let you die..."

Fireheart listened with a shocked expression on his face but still managed to ask in a soft tone " Do you know my parents ?" Nutmeg shook her head sadly " I don't know... I knew you were Jake's son because you look just like him but... I don't know your birth mother... I'm sorry for not having telling you this sooner..." The brown and white molly whispered in a sorrowful tone as she looked away in shame.

Her son stood there with a look of shock on his face : all his life was a lie. He was devastated to hear that his mother; the one who took care of him before being adopted by his Two-Legs.... Was not the one who gave birth to him.

Princess was as shocked as her brother and she wasn't the only one. Cloudpaw , Princess's son, had heard everything and slowly

approached his mentor "You will always be my uncle Fireheart..." the white apprentice whispered softy to the bright-flame furred tom who smiled gently in response.

Graystripe looked at his friend with a sad frown as well as Brightpaw and Creampelt. The cream pelted Queen's blue eyes looked at Fireheart with sorrow even if she knew him for a mere moment. "I forgive you...No matter that you didn't gave birth to me...You will always be my mother..." The flame pelted tom gently said to his mother who looked at him with a smile "You look so much like Jake....You are as adventurous and curious than him..." The Older Molly began to say with a fond smile before frowning.

"Are you okay ?" Princess asked her mother with concern "Yes...its just that I remembered that Jake was friends with some Clan-Cats...One of them was a tom named Talltail if I remember correctly..." Graystripe , Fireheart, Cloudpaw and Brightpaw's eyes widened in surprise at this revelation. The fire pelted tom looked at his best friend before asking "Graystripe... Are you thinking of what I think ?" "Yes...There is no other cat with that name... Thats explain why he is so friendly with you... " the dark gray tom responded with gravity but with a hint of humor.

Fireheart grunted in response but then looked at his mother when she asked "Do you know Talltail ?" " Is this Talltail a black and white tom with a long tail ?" her son asked suddenly and she nodded "Yes he is...from what Jake told me..."

Fireheart looked back at his best friend "No doubt possible it must be...." "Tallstar !" Graystripe resumed softy.

"Tallstar ?" Nutmeg asked with a frown "When a cat became Leader , it received nine lives from our ancestors and take at the end of their name 'star' " Fireheart explained to his mother whose eyes widened in shock. As Nutmeg asked more question about Clan-life, Brightpaw approached Creampelt's basket before taking a look at the small yellow she-kit sleeping against her belly "She is cute...What is her name ?" the white and ginger apprentice asked the Queen with a gentle tone.

Creampelt looked at her with a frown but soon her expression

softened "Her name is Goldenkit..." " Your name looks like ours...Are you a Clan Cat too ?" Brightpaw asked the cream pelted Queen with curiosity "Yes I am... I am a Warrior of the noblest Clan of all...." "Which one is it ?" the female apprentice asked gently and Creampelt responded with a gentle tone "Skyclan..."

Fireheart , Graystripe, and Cloudpaw heard her answer and all looked at her with shock . The dark gray tom with yellow eyes was the first one to speak his mind "What are you talking about ? There are only FOUR Clans in the forest and none of them are called 'Skyclan' !" Instantly, Creampelt growled angrily and Fireheart saw the sharp look laced with rage she was sending to his best friend

"Of course you don't know it ! After all you're the reason why my ancestors had to leave the forest !" The Cream pelted Queen spat furiously at Graystripe who backed away in surprise and fear at the sudden outburst as his ears were flattened against his skull. Fireheart jumped and placed himself between the two " How can Graystripe be responsible ? And if Skyclan do exist, then why no ones mentioned them before ?" the flame pelted Warrior asked the Queen in a attempt to have some answer .

Creampelt's blue eyes looked at him in a much calmer way " To know why I must start with the beginning..." she started to say before gesturing with her tail for the others to come closer. When they were all in front of her, the cream pelted Queen asked " Alright first of all.... I'm sure you heard about the first Clan-Leaders Thunder, River, Shadow and Wind , am I right ?" All former Thunderclan Cats nodded in response.

" What you probably didn't heard is about the fifth Leader named Sky who was also involved into the creation of the Clans many moons ago ! The former territory of my Clan used to be here , where we are standing right now !" Creampelt resumed in a calm tone while everyone were listening with a surprised look on their faces. Some of them looked skeptical (especially Graystripe) but chose to staid silent.

"What happened to Skyclan then ?" Brightpaw asked her gently from her pace near Cloudpaw. Creampelt looked at her with a straight look "Many moons ago, the last Skyclan's Leader of the

Forest , Cloudstar used to rule here among the others Clans. From what I heard, he had a pale gray fur with white patches and sky blue eyes..." At this description, Fireheart's green eyes widened : so the third cat he saw in his dream with Bluestar and Spottedleaf was Cloudstar !

"What did he want with me ? Why was he here ?" His thoughts were interrupted by Creampelt who resumed her explanations " During Cloudstar's reign, Two-Legs started to destroy our territory to create the Two-Legs Place... " she interrupted herself for a moment before resuming " Cloudstar tried his best to keep Skyclan safe... He even went as far as trying to take Thunderclan's territory ! But by lack of preys to sustain itself properly, Skyclan wasn't strong enough to fight... In his last effort to keep in Clan in the Forest , he asked all Leaders If they could share willingly their territories...."

Creampelt's claws unsheated as a silent growl escaped her throat. "But they all refused..." Fireheart finished as he understood the hostility she had showed earlier. The cream pelted Queen looked at him and nodded " Yes...Cloudstar's mate Birdflight had kits too small to travel so she had no choice but to stay behind ! Fortunately for her, Thunderclan accepted to take them in before Skyclan left the forest..."

"What happened to Skyclan after that ?" Cloudpaw asked with wide blue eyes "They found a new home... in a new forest and they still lived there... At first it was difficult because rats attacked the patrols but we managed to get rid of them once and for all !" Creampelt said the last part with proud. All Cats nodded respectfully : Rats were a nuisance and Cats' enemies after all.

"I'm sorry for what happened to your Clan...." Brightpaw whispered the Queen with a pained look on her face. Like the other former Thunderclanners, they had a bit of guilt about what the Clans did in the past. Creampelt looked at the apprentice with a soft smile "You don't need to be sorry for that...It wasn't your fault...None of you..." she said the last part as her blue eyes landed on Fireheart.

The bright-flamed colored tom was also sad about Skyclan's history and couldn't help but feeling a bit responsible : sure no one of his ancestors had participate at this but still he was a member of

Thunderclan ! But when Creampelt said those words , he calmed down with a sigh. "Sorry to interrupt but...what should we do now ?" Cloudpaw asked loudly to catch everyone's attention.

Brightpaw then added quickly to clear things "Yes should we join another Clan ? Or simply becoming kittypets or rogues ?" Everyone staid silent. Fireheart among them : they didn't even thought of that. After a moment Cloudpaw snorted as he responded " I think we should join a Clan ! We shouldn't be stuffing our faces with kittypet food ! We should be patrolling our territory and hunting !"

Fireheart winced at his apprentice's words as he glanced at Princess and Nutmeg. They both seemed hurt by the white apprentice's comments but the fire pelted tom noticed the pride in his sister's eyes. Brightpaw mewled her agreement before Graystripe spoke in a calm tone "I agree with you but which Clan we should join ? Shadowclan would NEVER take us in ! Windclan maybe but if Tigerstar heard about this...he would attack Tallstar without hesitation...."

"And we shouldn't think of Riverclan ! They won't let us because we refused to give them the kits after Silverstream's death and Leopardfur didn't forgive us for Whiteclaw's death !" Fireheart added with a wince as he remembered the terrible fight near the gorge after him and Graystripe brang Windclan back from their exile.

The dark gray tom winced at the memory as well. Brightpaw then whispered softy but loud enough for everyone to hear "Maybe we could join Skyclan ?" Cloudpaw looked at his friend with wide eyes "Are you crazy ?! They would tear our fur off if they learnt about being once in Thunderclan !" Brightpaw sighed and nodded in agreement.

Fireheart ,who had heard everything, looked at Creampelt "It is possible for us to join Skyclan ?" The Cream furred Queen went deep in thought before nodding " I will spoke to them... they will listen to me... I promise..." The flame pelted Warrior bowed his head respectfully in front of the large she-cat "Thank you for everything" "Its my pleasure~" Creampelt responded with a purr. Then a loud growl echoed and everyone turned their heads to see

Cloudpaw glaring at his stomach "Well someone else his hungry ?" Graystripe asked with a grin which caused everyone to laugh with humor

" Well I think we should go hunting then....Creampelt do you want some preys ?" Fireheart asked the Queen who looked back at him gratefully "Yes Thank you Fireheart~" There was something in her eyes which caused him to blush under his fur but he shook his thoughts as he entered the forest followed by Graystripe , Cloudpaw and Brightpaw. Princess and Nutmeg staid behind with Creampelt who looked at the older Molly with a warm smile "Your son is handsome~" the old brown and white molly grinned at this comment " I know that" The three she-cats giggled as they waited.

Some times later, the former Thunderclanners came back to Creampelt's house with their mouths full of preys. Fireheart had caught a mouse , a sparrow and a plump rabbit and he brang the latter to Creampelt who purred at the sight of the prey "Great catch ! Is that for me ?~" Fireheart nodded and gently deposed the dead rabbit in front of the Queen who thanked him again before digging in.

The flame pelted Warrior then picked up the mouse before sitting near Graystripe to enjoy their meals "When should we start looking for Skyclan ? " the dark gray tom asked as he feasted on a squirrel "Maybe we should first wait for the kits to be able to travel... They are too young..." Fireheart responded after a moment of silence "Agree...I hope its not too far..." Graystripe whispered back with a bit of worry.

" I hope so as well...." The fire pelted Warrior replied back softy when a Two-Leg's voice echoed in the distance "That's my owner ! I have to go but I will visit you !" Princess said as she licked her brother and Cloudpaw quickly before dashing away. Nutmeg watched her go before looking at her 'son' and grandson "I will go to... " she nuzzled Fireheart who nuzzled her back affectionately " I hope to see you again Mom..." "I hope too...my little fire~" Nutmeg whispered gently as she licked her son's forehead one last time before walking away.

Fireheart watched her go and when his mother disappeared , he

sighed as he looked back at his former Clan-mates before looking at Creampelt who just finished the rabbit he gave her " Can we sleep in your garden tonight ?" The large molly looked at him with a smile before nodding. Then the fire pelted tom noticed that Cloudpaw and Brightpaw were fight-faking and chuckled before walking away.

Outside, he looked at the sky , deep in thought. Today, he had learn many things and he didn't know what he should do when he remembered what Cloudstar said when he was with Bluestar and Spottedleaf the night before *"Your journey had just begun... a journey to find who you truly are..."* was what the Skyclan's ancestor said to him.

After a moment of thinking, Fireheart sighed as a feeling of determination entered his mind and heart : if Starclan wanted him to do this journey he will ! He knew Graystripe, Cloudpaw and Brightpaw would follow him to the end and he was sure that together ,and maybe with the help of Creampelt, they would find Skyclan.

Bit before that, Graystripe's kits had to be strong enough to make such a journey. The Kits's well-being was the first priority; When they would be old enough, then they would start looking for the fifth Clan and hopefully join it. His thoughts were interrupted by Cloudpaw who called for him "Fireheart ! Can we do some battle trainings ?" The white apprentice pleaded him eagerly and the flame colored tom chuckled at this nephew's enthusiasm

"Of course... Bring Brightpaw as well !" He ordered his apprentice who stormed away to look for his friend. Fireheart rolled his eyes playfully and when the two apprentices approached him, he leaded the two to a small clearing so they could practice without being disturbed. As they trained, Fireheart couldn't help but think about the future journey him and his friends will had to do. Sighing , he quickly shook his head to get rid of those thoughts before looking back at the two apprentices who were waiting for his instructions. "Alright let's start..."

(To be continued...)

Chapter 3 : Last day and Unexpected help

Some weeks passed since their banishment but the ex-Thunderclanners were still healthy and strong. Fireheart was sharing a vole and a mouse with Graystripe who couldn't stop looking at his kits. Stormkit and Featherkit had grown a lot and where right now playing with Goldenkit , Creampelt's daughter.

The former members of Thunderclan along with the large cream furred molly tried their best to teach the kits about Clan's life. They had made a 'nursery' under some bushes in the garden so they could sleep outside the Two-leg Den

Right now, Creampelt was still sleeping in the nursery and the two Warriors were making sure that the kits wouldn't try to wake her up.

Brightpaw and Cloudpaw ,for their part, was always seen together and the white apprentice's mentor (Fireheart) was thinking that the two were more than just friends. As the two Warriors were eating their preys, Brightpaw was playing with the kits while Cloudpaw was watching her with a smile. Fireheart knew that Brightpaw couldn't wait to have her first litter as she seemed to have a way with kits and chuckled as he thought that her first litter would be likely with Cloudpaw.

"So when are we going to find this 'Skyclan' ?" Graystripe asked his longtime friend as they licked each other's fur "Tomorrow I think... The kits are all a moon old now but they will still need to be carried... " Fireheart responded after a minute of silence. The dark gray tom nodded in agreement "They'll be able to walk for a distance but not the one needed if our goal is far away..." The fire pelted tom nodded in approval "First of all, we should ask who wish to come... "

"I will come ! I'm not going to stay here and becoming lazy and fat

like those stupid kittypets !" a familiar voice echoed and the two looked up to see Cloudpaw approaching them with determination. "I'll go as well... " Graystripe inquired softy but Fireheart could detect a hint of reluctance. Maybe because he was concerned for his kits' well-being ? *"It must be the reason..."* The flame pelted tom thought to himself before saying to them "I'm in !"

"I will go to !" Brightpaw's voice echoed as she approached them , a burning fire blazing in her eyes filled with determination but with a hint of fear. Cloudpaw purred with ravishment as he pressed his head against his friend who purred in response. Fireheart and Graystripe shared a knowing grin : one day those two would be mates.

However, their moment was interrupted by three fur-balls who were running toward them. Stormkit and Featherkit instantly pounced on their father who fell on his side , laughing. The third kit , Goldenkit , pressed her tiny body against Fireheart's chest , purring "Hey Fireheart can you play with me please ?" the pale yellow kit pleaded the fire pelted Warrior who couldn't help but chuckled.

The moment he was about to respond, Creampelt's voice echoed nearby "Good morning everyone~" Fireheart looked up to see the large cream furred she-cat stepped out of 'nursery' they created weeks ago. Her pale fur shined under the Sun's light revealing her well-muscled body and her broad-shoulders. "Good morning Creampelt ! Here some prey for you !" Fireheart shouted as he tossed her a lump mouse.

To everyone amazement, Creampelt managed to catch it in the air and the Fire pelted tom noticed that her legs especially the back ones looked really strong.

"Thank you Fireheart~" The large molly purred as she digged hungrily into her breakfast which caused everyone to twitch their whiskers in amusement.

When Creampelt finished her meal, she looked at them with a smile as her blue eyes landed on Stormkit and Featherkit still playing with their father.

Giggling with amusement, her sky blue eyes looked away to land on Fireheart " So are we leaving soon ?" she asked him gently. During the time they passed here, the former Thunderclanners got to know the cream furred molly a little better : after being named Warrior 2 moons , her mate Yellowpelt was killed by a fox while trying to protect her. Then she got captured by some Two-Legs and then she was forced to become a kittypet much to her disgust.

She didn't tried to befriend the other cats who lived in the same house-folk than her as she didn't had a really great opinion about kittypets. Surprisingly, the large cream furred molly quickly became good friends with the ex-Thunderclanners especially to Brightpaw and Fireheart which she treated him REALLY gently almost in a protective way (which confused him greatly !).

Fireheart looked at her before sighing " I think we should leave tomorrow ...The kits are strong enough to travel now..." Creampelt nodded in agreement before asking " And all of you are coming ? Or some want to stay ?" "We are all coming !" The bright flame pelted tom said with determination. His answer seemed to please the large cream furred molly because she let out of soft purr.

"Where are we going ?" Goldenkit's voice asked them and Fireheart looked at her with a smile : he almost forgot she was there. He was about to answer but Creampelt was faster "We are going to our true home dear～" The little she-kit nodded in understanding before looking at Storming and Featherkit , still playing with their father, with a look of jealousy.

Fireheart understood why she was like this and sighed silently. Some times ago , Creampelt and Graystripe revealed to Goldenkit that Featherkit and Stormkit weren't her siblings and that the dark gray tom wasn't her father. The pale yellow she-kit had nodded in understatement but still... Fireheart knew that she loved the other two kits but he also knew that the little she-kit was often left behind because of the games the other two had with their father. The dark gray tom had promised to be like a father figure to her but surprisingly, Graystripe didn't hold his promise as the gray tom always focused on his own kits and Fireheart knew that it was sure unintentional.

To change this, each time Goldenkit felt alone, Fireheart himself chose to play with her and he quickly grew fond of the little she-kit. Goldenkit took a liking to Fireheart and always go to him when Graystripe was playing with his kits.

Smirking playfully, Fireheart suddenly pounced at the small she-kit , trapping her between his forepaws . Laughing, Goldenkit wiggled free and wanted to pounce on him when the bright-flame pelted Warrior jumped away. Squealing in joy, she instantly got up before running after him. Creampelt watched the two with nothing but pure amusement and couldn't help with laugh. Stormkit and Featherkit , hearing Goldenkit's squeals, had turned their heads to see their friend running after Fireheart and instantly they jumped off their father before chasing the flame-pelted Warrior as well.

Fireheart was dodging another pounce from the pale yellow she-kit when something crashed against his body and he found himself on the ground. He looked up to see Stormkit and Featherkit pinning him down but before he could say something, Goldenkit joined in and the poor bright-flame furred tom was covered by kits. "I give up ! Pick on somebody your own size !" Fireheart shouted in a dramatical tone which caused to three to laugh. But they weren't the only ones amused by this.

Cloudpaw and Brightpaw watched the comical scene from their spot the scene and the two were laughing to their heat content while Creampelt and Graystripe were doing the same. "Someone can help me ?!" Fireheart inquired as he tried desperately to escape the three kits who were still play fighting with him. "I don't know... You look really cute right now~" Creampelt said gently as she watched and by the look on her face, Fireheart could tell that she was amused by his predicament.

His longtime friend grinned deviously at his plea "Not a chance !"the dark gray tom responded calmly but still grinning. The fire pelted tom looked at him a fake look of betrayal " And here I thought we were friends..." Only loud laughs responded to this. Fireheart then looked at Cloudpaw and Brightpaw with a grin of his own before saying " Alright kits ! I have a game for you !"

At those words, Stormkit ,Featherkit and Goldenkit got off the flame

pelted tom as they looked at him with childish curiosity "Which game is it Fireheart ?" The Fire pelted Warrior looked at Cloudpaw and Brightpaw with a dark grin "Here the game : there is TWO Riverclan Warriors here and you have to chase them !" "Where are they ?" Stormkit asked with excitement and the other two seemed just as excited. "Over there !" Fireheart pointed at the two apprentices with his tail.

Squealing in joy, the three kits dashed toward Brightpaw and Cloudpaw who yelped in shock when the trio attacked them. Fireheart slowly got up before approaching Creampelt and Graystripe who gave him a playful shove on the shoulder "Nice idea !". Creampelt nodded in agreement and giggled when she saw the two apprentices trying to escape their hilarious predicament.

Graystripe was looking at his kits with proud "One day they would be good Warriors like their mother..." "And like their mouse-brained father..." Fireheart added with a grin which caused the dark gray tom to look at him with a playful frown "Oh I am mouse-brained ?" "Yes ! Always were always will old friend !" The bright-flame colored tom responded with a grin. Graystripe went into a pouncing position , playful "Oh really ? We will see about that !" he said before pouncing on Fireheart.

As the two were fake-fighting, Creampelt shook her head with an amused sigh "Toms..." she whispered softy as she returned in the nursery. The other cats presents had stopped what they were doing to watch the two Warriors's false fight. After a moment, the two toms stepped away from each other , breathing in exhaustion "Just like old time ..." Graystripe remarked with a fond smile despise his tiredness "Yes... but unlike now , Ravenpaw was with us..." Fireheart responded before trailing off.

Speaking of the black tom remind him of all the good times he , Graystripe and himself shared moons ago back when they were still insignificant apprentices. " I hope he is okay..." The dark gray tom whispered as he looked toward where Barley's barn was situated. Fireheart hoped that their friend was alright as well : Barley's barn was in the way for Clan-Cats to reach Moonstone.

" I'm sure he got unnoticed by this fox-heart of Tigerstar !" Fireheart

said with a hint of humor which caused his friend to chuckle "Yes I remember that day back when he caught a snake !" the dark gray tom whispered with a soft smile. Fireheart's eyes closed as he too remembered that other souvenir of their apprenticeship.

" What do you want to do now ?" Graystripe asked his friend as he stretched his body . Fireheart staid silent for a moment before responding "I will go out with Cloudpaw and Brightpaw for some training... want to come ?" " I think I will stay here to look after the kits..." Graystripe's response caused the bright-flame furred Warrior to grin " I think you are getting to fat...Some exercises would definitely be good for you !"

The dark gray tom looked back at him with a glare " Its my fur who make me look puffy !" " Yeah right..." Fireheart chuckled as he padded away to approach Brightpaw and Cloudpaw "Come with me you two !" "Where are we going ?" Cloudpaw asked his mentor with a bit of curiosity "We will go training of course !" "Can we come please ?" Goldenkit asked the flame furred tom pleadingly and Stormkit and Featherkit looked at him with cute eyes.

Sadly, Fireheart shook his head "I'm sorry but you are much to young to come out of your own..." he began to explain softy but then eyed Graystripe with a devious grin : he didn't forget that his longtime friend didn't helped him earlier. "Now kits there is a Shadowclan cat here and I need great Warriors to chase it ! Are you great Warriors ?" "YES !" The three responded loudly "Well then...here is the Shadowclan Cat !" The Flame pelted tom pointed at Graystripe with the tip of his tail and instantly, the three kits run toward the gray tom at full speed.

Fireheart turned around to look at the two apprentices as Graystripe yelped in shock when the kits tackled him "Let's go !" he whispered hurriedly to them. Cloudpaw and Brightpaw were trying their best to hide their amusement when they saw Graystripe covered in kits but they obeyed and followed Fireheart as he padded away. The three Cats entered the forest before stopping to a small clearing. There the bright-flame colored tom asked them to show him their hunting crouches before demonstrating their battle movements by fighting each other. However what they didn't know was that someone was watching them.

The time passed and when Fireheart was about to order the apprentice to go hunting , a familiar voice echoed in the bushes near them "Fireheart ? Cloudpaw ? Brightpaw ? Is that you ?" The three Cats turned around with bristled fur but they all calmed down when they saw who was standing there in front of them "Cinderpaw ?" Fireheart asked with happiness as he saw the familiar dark gray she-cat with blue eyes. But at the sight of her twisted leg, he couldn't help but feel guilty : if he was a better mentor, Cinderpaw wouldn't be forced to become a medicine cat apprentice.

"My name is Cinderpelt now !" The newcomer revealed with delight as she looked at her former Clan-mates "Congratulations Cinderpelt !" Brightpaw said to her sister and Cloudpaw congratulated her as well "Its good to see you all ! How are you ?" the twisted legged molly asked them with curiosity "Well..." Fireheart began to say before telling her what happened to them after Tigerstar banished them.

"I will ask Yellowfang for traveling plants..." The dark gray she-cat whispered to herself but Fireheart heard her " No Cinderpelt ! Thank you for your offering but helping us would only put you in danger !" " I know but I don't care... You need help and I will help you either you like it or not !" Cinderpelt responded with authority. Fireheart hesitated for a moment but soon , he conceded "Alright but please be careful..."

The twisted legged she-cat purred and gently whispered "I promise...I will bring the herbs tonight !" "Alright then see you later !" The bright flame-colored tom nodded as he watched his former apprentice limping away. Then he led the two apprentices back to Creampelt's garden. When they arrived, Cloudpaw and Brightpaw went to take some rest while Fireheart was approached by Graystripe who was glaring at him half-serious half-amused " I am a Shadowclan Cat huh ?"

The fire pelted tom chuckled before looking back at his friend " We came across Cinderpaw , now Cinderpelt, during our training session... She offered to help us..." This revelation surprised Graystripe who looked at his friend with wide yellow eyes "Really ? How ?!" "She will ask Yellowfang to give her some traveling plants... If it work , she would bring them tonight..." Fireheart

responded calmly.

"Knowing her , she will success ! So we are both waiting her tonight ?" "Yes... we should tell Creampelt about this.." "She is watching the kits right now... " Graystripe pointed at the large cream furred molly who was indeed watching the kits playing together with a warm smile on her face. Fireheart thanked his friend and was about to walk away when Graystripe muttered something that only him heard "I will get you back for sending the kits to me !" "We will see about that old friend..." The flame pelted tom replied just as softy before walking away.

As he approached, Creampelt's blue eyes looked at him with a friendly expression on his face "Hey Fireheart ! You look exhausted..." like always, the bright-flame pelted tom felt touched by her care but shook his thought away to tell her about Cinderpelt and the possibility of having traveling herbs.

When he finished, the large cream furred molly was deep in thought "Skyclan's territory is rather far from here... I remember the way to here from there but I couldn't do it until now..." Fireheart understood what she meant : doing such a travel with a kit is hard but doing it during pregnancy is worse. "Where is Skyclan's territory ?" Fireheart asked her and she went silent for a second before responding " Far in the north..."

Fireheart then noticed that Barley's barn was in their way and an idea came to him " There is a barn not too far from here... Maybe we can staid there a while before resuming our journey ?" "Why do you want to go there ?" Creampelt asked him with a frown of confusion " First of all ,the barn in on the same way that we are heading... Secondly because a friend of mine can help us there... and thirdly to be sure he is alright..." Fireheart explained softy to the cream furred Queen who nodded in understanding.

"Alright then... we will go to this barn first.... Who is this friend of yours if I may ask ?" Creampelt asked with a bit of curiosity. Fireheart smiled fondly as he told her who was Ravenpaw and why he had to leave Thunderclan as well as why he wanted to see him. "I'm sure he will be fine Fireheart ! But you know... Your good heart is what I like the most in you~" Creampelt remarked with a playful

wink.

At this gesture, embarrassment filled Fireheart and he looked away to hide it. The large cream furred Molly giggled at this behavior and gently she licked the top of his head before approaching the kits , leaving an embarrassed Fireheart behind. The bright-flame pelted Warrior didn't know why she acted so....friendly with him. He didn't complained far from it but...she warmed up to him quicker than the others.

He shook his head to get rid of those thoughts and looked at the sky as many questions entered his mind like : was Thunderclan alright under Tigerstar's Leadership ? Was Ravenpaw , his second best friend, was okay ? Will Cinderpelt came back with the herbs ?

Hours passed and the sun was declining. Creampelt gathered all kits around her in the nursery and the three were peacefully sleeping against her soft belly. Earlier, Princess visited them alongside Nutmeg and they passed some time with the group before their Two-Legs called them. Fireheart had watched them leave with a heavy heart because it might be the last time he would see them. Cloudpaw , his apprentice, too was a bit sad about leaving his mother behind but he had too. Brightpaw was right now laying against him , trying her best to comfort the poor white tom with gentle licks and nuzzles.

As planned Fireheart and Graystripe were ready to go look for Cinderpelt "Be careful~" Creampelt told them in a soft tone even if her eyes were more on Fireheart than Graystripe. The Fire pelted tom approached her before gently pressing his head against her's "We will don't you..." "Fireheart come on !" Graystripe called for him as the dark gray tom was ready to go.

Fireheart rolled his eyes at his friend and with a soft smile to the cream furred Queen , he padded into the forest after his friend. As they walked, Fireheart noticed the mischief in Graystripe's eyes and asked "Why are you looking at me like that ?" "Oh nothing... I just noticed that Creampelt and you seemed...quite close..." The bright flame-colored tom stopped dead in his track hearing this. Thankfully, he had ginger fur so it hided his blush "We are just good friends ! Nothing more !" "If you say so..." The gray tom shrugged in

disdain but the look in his yellow eyes clearly said what he was thinking.

Grunting in annoyance, Fireheart walked faster which caused his companion's whiskers to twitch in amusement. As they approached the place where Fireheart chose to train Brightpaw and Cloudpaw , another figure was already there with some bundles of herbs at her paws. "Finally ! You took your time ! It wasn't easy to get out of camp with those !" Cinderpelt declared with a bit of anger.

The two toms stopped when they were in front of her "Sorry... Graystripe ate too much recently !" Fireheart declared innocently which caused his gray friend to gap in shock before glaring at him. Cinderpelt's whiskers twitched and Fireheart detected her amusement. "Yellowfang wish you good luck for your journey.... She would have come herself but she couldn't..." The twisted legged dark gray molly explained softy.

Fireheart nodded : he would have loved to see Yellowfang one more time and was a bit disappointed. "Thank Yellowfang for us when you go back to camp ! And thank you again for helping us !" Cinderpelt purred before saying gently "You might not be my Clan-mates anymore but you're still my friends~" The two toms nodded and then one by one , they pressed their heads against each other to say goodbye.

"May Starclan light your path !" Cinderpelt said to the two as she limped away "And yours as well !" Fireheart declared back and felt a pang of sadness as he saw his first apprentice slowly disappearing in the darkness of the night. Graystripe then punched him on the shoulder " I ate too much huh ?" Fireheart looked at his longtime friend with a grin before picking up some bundles between his jaws and walking away. Graystripe was doing the same and the two walked back to Creampelt's garden only to find everyone asleep already.

Carefully they deposed their charges under some bushes before walking toward another one were they installed their nests. Fireheart climbed on his nest , curled around himself before putting his head on his front-paws "Goodnight Graystripe..." he whispered to his friend who was laying next to him "Goodnight..." Graystripe

responded as the dark gray tom yawned tiredly before falling asleep.

Fireheart staid awake for a moment and looked at the stars shining in the dark sky *"Starclan please protect Thunderclan and help us find Skyclan !"* he prayed silently to his ancestors before putting his head back on his front-paws and falling asleep. Tomorrow was the great day and they all needed their strength.

(To be continue...)

Chapter 4 : Whitestorm and Barley's barn

Fireheart was the first one to wake up the next day. He opened his maw , exposing his sharp fangs as he yawned softy. Slowly, he got up before using his left paw to nudge the dark gray form of Graystripe , still sleeping peacefully near Fireheart's nest. "Come on sleepyhead its time !" The fire pelted tom inquired softy to his friend who grumbled tiredly before waking up.

Yawning loudly, Graystripe looked up and his yellow eyes locked into green ones "It is morning already ?" Fireheart chuckled in response "Yes let's wake the others..." the bright-flame colored Warrior replied as he stepped out of the bushes they were sleeping under. Fireheart closed his eyes as he stretched his muscular body, purring at the warm feeling of the Sun against his flame colored fur.

"Are you done ?" Graystripe said as he looked at his friend with a playful roll of his eyes. Fireheart grunted but then he approached Cloudpaw and Brightpaw silently. The two apprentices were pressed against each other , sleeping peacefully. The bright-flame colored tom then lowered his head down when he stopped in front of them before saying half-loudly half-softy "Time to make up you two !"

At those words, Brightpaw was the first one to get up and she looked fearful for a moment but quickly calmed down when she saw Fireheart standing in front of her. Cloudpaw was the last of the two to get up but he did...though groggily. "Don't tell me its morning already ?!" the white apprentice complained tiredly as his blue eyes looked at his mentor. His behavior caused the other two to snort in amusement.

" Yes it is and did you forget what day it is ?" The flame furred tom asked his apprentice with a serious tone but amusement clear in his emerald green eyes. Cloudpaw stared at his mentor blankly for a

second but soon a flash of remembrance appeared in his blue eyes " Oh ! Its today we leave right ?! " the white apprentice asked with eagerness as he jumped out of his nest .

Amused by his nephew's antics, Fireheart chuckled before responding "Indeed ! Now go get yourself some preys at the pile !" he ordered them as the bright-flame tom used the tip of his tail to point at the bundles of herbs Cinderpelt gave them the day before. They needed to eat those plants even the kits.

Fireheart watched as Cloudpaw and Brightpaw approached the pile before making his way toward the soon-to-be-abandoned nursery before taking a look outside. Creampelt was laying on her nest with Stormkit, Featherkit and Goldenkit cuddled against her soft tummy. All of them were sleeping peacefully and for a moment, the fire pelted tom wanted to let them stay this way but sadly he couldn't.

Taking a deep breath, Fireheart gathered all his courage to approach the sleeping Queen and kits . He remembered that day when Graystripe was the one waking up the large cream furred molly and couldn't but feeling a bit worried. The dark gray tom had accidentally stepped on the she-cat's tail and she pinned him down angrily on the ground. Graystripe had coughed dirt for a long time after she decided to release him and the yellow eyed tom's gray fur was covered in dust.

Fireheart , too be sure to not make the same mistake, contoured the nest so he wouldn't step on her large fluffy tail. For the moment, nothing bad happened which was good. The bright-flame colored tom stopped when he was just in front of Creampelt's sleeping face and slowly, he lowered his head down before whispering softy "Creampelt it is time..."

Sadly it didn't work so Fireheart had to use another method...one he would surely regret later. He used the tip of his tail to tickle the large molly's nose and after a few seconds , Creampelt sneezed softy. Then she went back to sleep much to Fireheart's chagrin. So he tickled her nose again and this time , it seemed to work. She sneezed louder and because of the still tickling sensation of her nose, she woke up.

When her sky blue eyes landed on Fireheart , she seemed pleased at first but soon her pleasant look turned into a frown as she growled "Fireheart..." "Y-Yes ?" The bright-flame colored tom asked with a bit of fear at the anger present in the large cream colored molly's eyes "Did you just tickled my nose ? Twice ?" she asked him calmly but the anger still evident in her tone and eyes. " I did.... But It was just to wake you up !" Fireheart responded as he slowly backed away

Creampelt glared at him for a moment then she smiled as she seemed to be much calmer "Alright I forgive you but...don't do this again in the future..." she said the last time with an undertone of menace which caused the bright-flame colored tom to shiver in fear as he nodded. Fireheart was a bit surprised that she didn't attacked him like she did to Graystripe but he was glad she didn't. But deep down, he was still wondering why she was acting so nicely with him.

Shaking his head to clear his mind of those thoughts, the flame furred tom looked back at the Cream furred Molly still laying in the nest "It almost time to go now...Can you wake the kits please ?" Creampelt nodded with a smile "Of course~" she purred gently before nudging the kits one by ones with her nose "Come on little ones...Its time to wake up~"

The first one to wake up was of course Goldenkit. The pale yellow she-kit looked around before noticing Fireheart. She instantly became fully awake as she crawled toward him much to both adults' amusement. "Hey Fireheart ! Good morning !" the little she-kit squealed as she faced the bright-flame colored tom , looking up at him with a cute expression on her face.

Chuckling, Fireheart lowered his head down to nuzzle the kit's head " Good morning to you too Goldenkit ! Already excited I see..." Purring, Goldenkit nodded in approval " What are we going to do today ?" she asked him excitedly and Creampelt , her mother, was the one to respond "We are going to see some friends of Fireheart before going to our home dear~"

" Who are your friends Fireheart ?" Featherkit asked as she looked up at them with her sky blue eyes. "Yes who are they ?" Her brother

Stormkit inquired as he joined in the conversation. The bright-flame colored tom chuckled before explaining softy " The friends we are talking about are not Clan-Cats but loners... One of them , Ravenpaw, was once a member of Thunderclan but he was forced to leave for his safety. He , me and Graystripe trained together when we were still apprentices.."

The three kits listened with interest and awe while Creampelt purred in amusement " We are going to see them today and we might stay with them for a bit before going home~" she explained gently , eying Fireheart with a soft smile. " Can we go now ?" Featherkit asked loudly as she seemed eager to leave . Stormkit and Goldenkit seemed just as excited.

"First of all, we should ate something and then yes we will leave..." The second Fireheart finished talking, the three kits cheered loudly as they dashed outside. "Where did they got all that energy ?" The bright-flame colored tom asked amusingly to himself but Creampelt heard him " Don't ask me~" she whispered back to him as she got up. Then she started to pad away when she pressed her large body against Fireheart's smaller one , purring.

The flame pelted tom was a bit surprised by the gesture but didn't say anything as he watched her walking away from him before stopping for second to wink playfully at him. Fireheart looked away in pure embarrassment and he could hear her purring in amusement which caused him to become more embarrassed.

Shaking his head, the fire pelted tom stepped out of the nursery before looking around with his green emerald eyes...until Graystripe called for him "Fireheart are you coming ?!"

The flame colored tom looked toward his longtime friend who finished eating his bundle of herbs. Cloudpaw and Brightpaw was eating their own while Creampelt and the kits were doing the same with theirs. To the flame pelted tom's amusement , the kits and apprentice were making face of disguts at the plant's taste. Fireheart approached the dark gray tom who looked at him with a fake look of annoyance "You took your time ! Here your herbs!" Graystripe explained as he pushed the bundle toward the bright flame-colored tom. "Thank you old friend" Fireheart said as he crouched down .

" To reach the barn, We have to pass though Thunderclan's territory to reach Fourtrees... " Graystripe pointed out as he waited for his friend "I know but we have no choice... We could only pray Starclan that we don't get caugh by a morning patrol..." Fireheart said in agreement after swallowing the herb which caused him to make a disgusted face "And after that, we still had to go though Windclan's territory..." The dark gray tom remarked as he looked at his longtime friend with a hint of worry in his yellow eyes.

Tigerstar had surely ordered the Clan to kill them on sight if one of them got caught tresspassing on their territory. "I agree.... We need to avoid being spotted by a patrol..." Fireheart declared after a moment of silence and Graystripe nodded in agreement. When the flame pelted tom finished talking , he got up along with Graystripe before approaching the gathering cats who also finished swallowing the disgusting but necessary plants .

Fireheart examined the group one by one : Graystripe looked back at him with determination even if the concern was also present in his yellow eyes , Brightpaw seemed scared but a fire of determination burned in her blue eyes , Cloudpaw was trying to comfort his friend but when he looked at his mentor , Fireheart could see that he was as determined as the others.

Then the flame pelted tom's green eyes landed on Creampelt and the kits : the large Queen looked calm but a hint of happiness was present in her sky blue eyes and Fireheart knew that she was eager to go. Stormkit, Featherkit and Goldenkit looked eager to go on an adventure and he couldn't help but shaking his head in amusement. He cleared his throat which caught everyone's attention " Are we all ready ?"

The group of Cats gathered in front of him all nodded in response " Very well then... Let's go !" Fireheart began to say before adding " You need to go though Thunderclan territory o we need to be careful and quiet. Graystripe , Cloudpaw take a side of the group and staid alert for a patrol or something else !" When the two toms nodded Fireheart leaded them, thought the forest toward the Thunderpath . The group followed after him cautiously : Graystripe stood at the left side of the group while Cloudpaw was at the right , to protect the kits if something attacked. As they walked, the kits

were looking around in awe as it was the first time they had see the forest and they shivered a little with excitement.

As he leaded the group, Fireheart's senses were in alert , looking around for a morning patrol or another threat the forest had like foxes or badgers. To an attempt to hide their scents, the fire pelted tom decided to set a pace near the border between Thunderclan and Riverclan and for the moment nothing bad happened as Fireheart was grateful for the kits' silence.

But suddenly, the fire pelted tom froze in his tracks causing his companions to halt behind him "Fireheart what's going on ?" Brightpaw asked the fiery pelted tom with concern "Do you smell that ?" Fireheart inquired in a soft tone. Graystripe smelled the air and flinched "Thunderclan's patrol !" "It is coming here !" Cloudpaw added with a bit of fear.

Creampelt then looked around before saying "Quick over there !" she was pointing with her nose to a large heather bush. "The smell would hide ours ! Come on !" the large cream pelted Queen dashed toward the bush with the kits before hiding among the leaves while Graystripe , Cloudpaw and Brightpaw climbed on a tree. Fireheart ,for his part, went to hide in the heather-bush with the Queen and the kits. They all held their breaths as they waited even if Goldenkit's body was pressed against Fireheart's as she shivered in fear.

Soon two voices echoed and Fireheart recognized them instantly ; those voices belonged to Mousefur and Whitestorm. "Mousefur ! Take your apprentice back to camp ! I smell a mouse here don't wait for me !" Whitestorm's deep voice was heard and soon the bright-flame colored heard some footsteps which were becoming weaker and weaker as their owners were going away from their hiding spot.

Fireheart sighed in relief but soon flinched when he heard someone approaching them "Fireheart ? Graystripe ? Is that you ?" a familiar voice echoed as someone stopped in front of the bush. Fireheart gathered all his courage as he stepped out of his hiding place to face the cat who was standing there : Whitestorm. The flame colored tom looked around and was glad to see that the senior

Warrior was alone " Its good to see you again young cat !" The White tom welcomed Fireheart with a friendly expression on his face "Its good to see you too Whitestorm ! I'm sorry for trespassing but... we're just passing though Thunderclan's territory..." The flame colored tom responded back in a apologizing manner

"We ?" Whitestorm asked with a raise-brow as his yellow eyes looked at Fireheart. The flame colored tom then shouted "Come out guys its safe !" At those words, Graystripe, Cloudpaw and Brightpaw climbed down the tree while Creampelt stepped out of the heather-bush along with the kits. The Senior Warrior looked at them all before asking "So where are you all heading ?"

The bright-flame furred tom sighed before calmly explaining to the white tom that they were all on a journey and that they needed to pass though Thunderclan's territory. When he finished, the white Senior Warrior closed his eyes for a moment and when he re-opened them, he spoke in a calm tone " If you are only passing though , they I would escort you to Fourtrees..."

At those words, Fireheart blinked in surprise as he stared at the Older tom with wide eyes but nodded as he along with the rest of the group followed the white tom as he leaded them toward where the Four Clans usually met during Gatherings. As they walked trough the forest, Fireheart padded beside the noble White tom "Thank you Whitestorm for helping us but why are you doing this ?" he asked the Senior Warrior in a soft tone.

Whitestorm looked at the bright-flame colored tom out of the corner of his yellow eyes before responding " The first reason is that what Tigerstar did to you, Graystripe and Cloudpaw was unfair and if you hadn't been banished, you would had every right to be here just as I do..." he trailed off before adding in a tone full of grief " the second reason is that Bluestar would have wanted me to help you..."

Hearing his mentor's name caused Fireheart to feel a pang of sadness. Bluestar was the one who offered him to joy the Clan moons ago... she was his mentor and his Leader... "I know she would..." the bright-flame furred tom whispered softy so only the noble Senior Warrior would hear him and Whitestorm nodded in silence.

The rest of the trip was rather silent and when the group reached Fourtrees , Whitestorm stopped "I think its far enough now... I must return to camp now... You and Graystripe can lead them now...I promise to not tell anyone that I saw you..." the senior Warrior mewled softy and the two ex-Warriors of Thunderclan bowed their heads in respect and gratefulness. "Thank you again for helping us Whitestorm ! May Starclan lights your path !" " I wish you the same to you all ! And Brightpaw..." Whitestorm looked at his former apprentice "Take care of yourself..."

The white and ginger apprentice nodded her head respectfully to her former mentor and Whitestorm padded away to the safety of Thunderclan's territory. Creampelt watched him go with worry while Graystripe seemed relieved that the white tom on their sides. Brightpaw seemed a bit sad but Cloudpaw managed to comfort her by pressing his body against hers.

"Are you sure we can trust him ?" Creampelt asked the flame pelted tom with a look of suspicion in her sky blue eyes " Whitestorm is a noble Warrior... He would never break a promise..." Fireheart responded calmly and the large cream furred Queen nodded in acceptance. After that, the fiery pelted tom walked down into the slop which lead to Fourtrees and Fireheart glanced at the Great Rock where Leaders usually stood during Gatherings.

The kits squealed in pure amazement as they looked around and they were about to explore this new place when Creampelt called for them. Fireheart and Graystripe looked at each other before the two leaded the rest of their comrades toward a path which would take them to Windclan's territory.

The two former Warriors of Thunderclan quickly leaded the group through Windclan's vast land and to their relief, they didn't came across any patrol *"Thanks Starclan !"* Fireheart silently thanked his ancestors as he saw Barley's barn in the distance and the thought of seeing his old friend again caused him to purr.

However when they were close enough, Cloudpaw hissed as his fur bristled " Dogs !" Creampelt and Brightpaw smelled the air as well as Fireheart and Graystripe and indeed, the scent of Dogs could be detected in the air. "Calm down ! The Dogs are attached !"

Graystripe said in a calm but amused tone.

Fireheart nodded in agreement and everyone calmed down.

Then the fire pelted tom was about to walk away when something rustled near them and instinctively, Graystripe and him went into a menacing position standing between the kits ad whatever was approaching them. Cloudpaw and Brigthpaw were standing at each of Creampelt's side while the large molly pulled the kits against her glaring at the direction the rustles came from.

A moment passed and a familiar smell appeared and caused both Fireheart and Graystripe to calm down. Why ? Because they had recognized the owner's smell. Soon, a black and white tom with blue eyes appeared "Barley ! Its been a long time !" Fireheart welcomed the loner friendly "Its good to see you too Fireheart and Graystripe ! Who are your friends ?" the loner asked as he looked at the others cats standing behind the two Warriors.

" The white tom with blue eyes is my apprentice and nephew Cloudpaw... The white and ginger she-cat is Brightpaw... The large molly with the kits is Creampelt and..." Fireheart began to present his comrades when he was interrupted by a familiar pale yellow she-kit "I'm Goldenkit !" Then Graystripe's kits approached " I'm Featherkit !" "and I'm Stormkit !" they both said respectively to the loner who chuckled with amusement.

"Its nice to meet you all but what are you doing here ? All of you..." Barley asked them with a curious raise-brow. Fireheart looked at his longtime friend then at his companions before looking back at the loner "Well its a long story..." "I'm sure Ravenpaw would want to hear it too ! Follow me !" Barley interrupted him as he leaded them toward toward the barn. When they entered the wooden building, a black form was resting in some hay.

"Ravenpaw ! Look who is here !" Barley called loudly and the black furred cat turned his head to face them before purring in happiness when he saw his old friend. He got up before approaching them "Fireheart ! Graystripe ! How are you ?" "We are fine fine ! And you seem to have a good life..." the dark gray tom said teasingly as he glanced at his friend's well-fed fur.

Ravenpaw laughed with humor before his green eyes landed on the other cats "Who are they ?" Fireheart did the presentations again and the black tom bowed his head in greetings before looking at Stormkit "Graystripe it is me or this kit look just like you ?" The dark gray tom purred in response "Of course he do ! Stormkit and Featherkit are my kits !" Graystripe explained with a look of proud in his yellow eyes.

"Congratulations ! But what about her ?" He pointed at Goldenkit "She is my daughter~" Creampelt responded with a purr as she tenderly licked her kit's head. Ravenpaw blinked in surprise before asking "Then who are your kits' mother Graystripe ?" This question caused the dark gray tom to became sad and Fireheart sighed "What about we talk in a more private place ? And maybe let the kits play for a bit ? " At those words, the three kits squealed in eagerness and Barley pointed toward a haystack at the corner of the barn "Over there young ones !" he said and the kits dashed away.

All adults laughed in amusement but soon calmed down as they looked at each other " So is there a reason for you being here ?" The black-and-white tom asked with as they all sat on some hay. Graystripe , Fireheart , Cloudpaw and Brightpaw staid silent for a moment and they all looked pained. Ravenpaw looked at each of them with concern and knew by their faces that something was wrong "What happened ?"

The bright flame pelted tom sighed as he looked at the two loners before him "Well....a moon ago , a large group of rogues attacked our camp.... Bluestar was killed by Tigerclaw... and this traitor became Thunderclan's new Leader..." Fireheart began to say before Graystripe took over " He exiled Fireheart and Cloudpaw because they were not Clan-born... And he exiled me because I had kits with a Riverclan's Warrior , Silverstream... Brightpaw decided to come with us in exile..."

Ravenpaw and Barley stood there with shocked look on their faces " I knew Tigerclaw was a monster !" the black tom snarled in anger as he remembered his mentor " what about you ?" Barley asked the cream furred Molly who explained them calmly to them who she was and where she came from.

When she finished, the two loners were shocked by those revelations but soon the black-and-white tom shook his head to clear his mind before saying "You are free to stay as long as you want !"

"Thank you Barley ! You too Ravenpaw..." Fireheart started to say before his black friend interrupted him "You both saved my life... I will always help you as you are my friends..." Ravenpaw explained calmly before the three friends pressed their heads against each others'. After that, the two loners offered the group to hunt and the travelers happily accepted and when the night came, all of them were sated and were happily making themselves comfortable in the barn.

The kits went to sleep against Creampelt's warm tummy while Cloudpaw and Brightpaw were sleeping together, their furs pressed against each other. Graystripe and Fireheart were sleeping near Barley and Ravenpaw and fire pelted tom was glad that his other best friend was safe and was starting to think that they would success in finding Skyclan.

(To be continued...)

Chapter 5 : The Journey begins...

[image]

Fireheart woke up when the light entered the barn he and his friends were currently sleeping in. Two days had passed since the travelers entered the barn and the flame colored tom knew it was time to go find Skyclan. He closed his eyes as he let out a soft sight : he couldn't believe what happened since the last moon : from being banished by the treacherous Tigerstar , then discover the existence of a fifth Clan than no one had heard and the fact that Nutmeg wasn't his birth mother to begin to journey to find Skyclan.

Shaking his head, the bright flame colored tom slowly got out of his nest , stretching his body before approaching the others. Stormkit and Featherkit were playing with their father Graystripe while Goldenkit was sitting near her mother Creampelt who was watching grooming her kit's pelt with affectionate lick . Fireheart smiled at the scene before looking around : Cloudpaw and Brightpaw were sharing some mice , their furs pressed against one another while Ravenpaw was sharing tongues with Barley.

Then he heard some footsteps approaching him and he turned his head to see Creampelt with a large rabbit between her jaws. The large cream furred molly lowered her head down to put down her prey before looking back at Fireheart with a warm smile "Do you want to share with me ?" she asked him softy and the bright flame furred tom nodded in response before settling down beside her large form. As he settled down, he heard her purring in delight and he internally chuckled before tearing warm flesh of the prey apart.

The two ate slowly and mostly in silence and when Fireheart finished his last piece of meat , he could feel Creampelt's muzzle brushing against his nose before gently licking it to get rid of the blood on it. Then the two shared tongues and Fireheart relaxed greatly under the rasping of the large molly's warm tongue. Like

always, the bright flame colored tom enjoyed her company but deep down , he was still wondering why she was acting so friendly toward him.

As he licked Creampelt's side, he felt something snuggling against him and he opened his green emerald eyes to see Goldenkit making her way between the two. Amused, Fireheart asked with a raise-brow " What are you doing ?" The pale yellow she-kit looked at him with her big blue eyes , deeper than her mother's "Nothing... I just wanted to be with you both..."

Creampelt purred with affection as she lowered down to lick her kit's head fondly and Fireheart nuzzled the little fur-ball who purred in content, her eyes closed. The bright flame pelted tom then looked back at the large molly before suggesting softy "We should gather everyone.... We need to talk about...you know..." Creampelt nodded in understanding "Yes...Its time to finally see my home again..."

"Should we talk to the others now ? Or do you prefer to wait ?" Fireheart asked her gently " The sooner the better" was her answer. Nodding, the flame pelted tom got up before approaching Graystripe. Stormkit and Featherkit , instantly stopped assaulting their father to welcome the newcomer "Hi Fireheart do you want to play with us ?" the silver tabby she-kit asked him with cute eyes and her brother was equally looked at the fire pelted tom with a pleading look.

Fireheart shook his head "Sorry kits I need to speak with your father..." The kits awed sadly in response and to cheer them up, he quickly added "Maybe Goldenkit would want to play with you...You should go ask her !" At those words, the two squealed in delight and they dashed toward the pale yellow she-kit still snuggling against her mother.

Graystripe chuckled as he saw the three playing together before looking at his longtime friend "So what do you want to talk about ?" " Try to guess..." Fireheart asked him with a raise-brow and after a moment of silence, the drk gray tom responded "I see... Do you need help to gather everyone ?" "Yes thank you..." the fire pelted tom nodded in response as the two separated to each other to gather the others.

Graystripe went toward Barley and Ravenpaw while Fireheart approached the two apprentices who were sharing tongues to each other. As the bright flame pelted tom approached , Brightpaw looked up at him "Hey Fireheart !" The fire furred Warrior nodded a greeting before Cloudpaw asked with a titled head "Fireheart... Do you know where we needed to go to find Skyclan ?"

The flame pelted tom looked at the two "That's why we need to round up everyone so we could speak about this subject !" When the two nodded, Fireheart led them toward a single haystack before leaping on it. Soon the rest of the group came over to sit around Fireheart. Ravenpaw sat on another haystack near the one the flame pelted tom was on to listen while Barley left to take a look at the Dogs and to hunt for a bit.

"Alright everyone ! Its time to discuss what will do now..." Fireheart mewled out as all cats looked at him. " My mother told me the story of how our ancestors found the gorge where our Clan actually reside..." Creampelt remarked in a serious tone "So ? " Graystripe asked her hurriedly with a raise-brow. The large cream furred molly sighed before responding in a calm tone " They followed the river to its source..."

" What ?! But to reach the river we need to go through Windclan's territory... again.." The dark gray tom remarked with a groan. Fireheart understood his friend's behavior : they were lucky to not get caught by a patrol when they passed the moors two days ago. " We have no choice but to go through Tallstar's territory... and pray Starclan that everything would be fine..." The flame pelted tom sighed as he said those words.

"Fireheart did you forgot that Windclan are hostile since they learnt about us sheltering Brokentail ?!" Graystripe asked his friends who winced at the memory of Shadowclan and Windclan attacking their Clan after they learnt that Thunderclan sheltered the former Shadowclan's Leader. "I didn't forgot Graystripe but do we have another choice ?" Fireheart asked his longtime friend who looked away, having no response for that.

"Even if we get caught , we will have kits with us and they are protected by the Warrior Code ! They wouldn't attack us..."

Brightpaw inquired calmly as she looked at the three kits who were silently listening. " I know the way to the river..." another voice echoed and everyone turned their heads to see Barley approaching them.

" You do ?" Fireheart asked the black and white tom who nodded in response " I will lead you there if you want..." "We accept your offer Barley..." The bright flame colored tom mewled to the older cat and the others did the same. "We should leave now...A long journey is waiting us..." Fireheart said to the others before climbing down the haystack he was sitting on. Everyone walked out of the barn but the black loner led his two old friends away so they could be alone for a moment.

"Well then...I think its time to say good bye..." Ravenpaw whispered in a sad tone as he looked at the two and Fireheart felt a pang of sadness as he thought it was the last time he would see the black tom and gently he approached his friend before their heads against each other as Graystripe approached "Thank you Ravenpaw... and I hope to see you again..." the fire pelted tom whispered to his black friend who purred sadly in response.

" I hope it as well Fireheart ! And I will never forget you...both of you..." Ravenpew said as he pressed his head against Graystripe's who whispered " We won't forget you either old friend... Take care..." The group of friends mewled their last goodbyes to each other before Fireheart and Graystripe trotted back toward where the rest of the group were waiting them.

"Ready ?" Barley asked them and when everyone nodded, the black and white tom padded away to who know where. Fireheart followed him along with Graystripe and the others. Cloudpaw and Brightpaw were trotting side by side while Creampelt had the kits walking beside her. The sound of Dogs barking caused the kits to squeal in fear but they quickly calmed down when Creampelt whispered some comforting words to them.

Soon the group could hear the faint sound of rushing water and a few moments later, they were facing the river again. They didn't have to go through Winclan's territory after all...Fireheart looked at Barley with a thankful smile on his face but also with a hint of

sadness " Thank you for your help...and farewell..." "Farewell Fireheart... Good luck for your journey !" The black and white loner replied in response before running back toward the barn.

The bright flame pelted Warrior watched him go before sighing in sadness. Suddenly, he felt something pressing against his side and turned his head to see Creampelt looking at him with a soft smile "You will see them one day..." "I hope so..." Fireheart whispered back as he looked toward where the barn was situated.

Gently, the large cream furred molly licked the tom's head whispering "Its time to go...". Fireheart sighed before facing the members of the group who looked at him with determination "Are we all ready ?" the bright-flame pelted tom asked loudly and he saw the others nodding in response "Well then let's go !" With that said, Fireheart and his group followed the course of the river to find its source where , from what Creampelt told them, Skyclan resided.

The journey to find Skyclan had just begun....

(To be continued...)

Note : Use the map above to find how they managed to reach the river WITHOUT going through Tallstar's territory ^^ Oh and please help me about what to do in the other chapters ?

Chapter 6 : The End of a Long Journey and Rescue

It had been days since the group left Barley and Ravenpaw's barn to find Skyclan's territory. During this long journey , they passed though farmlands and Two-Legs Dens , encountering many obstacles such as Dogs or Rogues Cats . They were all tired but thankfully no one was sick or injured as they kept searching for Creampelt's Clan.

Speaking of the large cream furred Queen, she was leading the group as they followed the river flowing at their side. Fireheart was just behind her as he looked around cautiously for any threat that would endanger them especially the kits. Graystripe and Cloupaw were guarding each side of the group in a protective manner as Brightpaw had the kits gathered around her. They were now in territories far beyond that everything they knew....far from Clans territory...in hostile areas where everything could happen.

As he walked, Fireheart was deep in thought as he let out a deep sigh : he missed the Forest dearly but he along with his comrades couldn't go back. Despise his sadness through, the bright-flame pelted tom was a bit curious about this unknown fifth Clan and couldn't help but being a bit worried : Skyclan had a comprehensible grudge against the other Clans and surely won't be very happy to see FOUR former Thunderclan Warriors on their territory.

Shaking his head to get rid of his worry, Fireheart thought about the other subject that had been bothering him for a long time now . Since he learned that Nutmeg wasn't his real mother, he was always wondering about WHO was the she-cat who gave birth to him and why did she abandoned him...and if she didn't then where was she ? At first , he tried to forgot about this but sadly, since the first night after the beginning of this journey , the fire pelted tom had some

strange dreams , always the same one, and even now he couldn't understand what it meant.

(Flashback)

The group decided to stop as night was starting to show up. It had been hours since they left Ravenpaw and Barley and they were all tired. Their bodies hatched but maybe a good rest would help a little. They made some nest under a large bush of brambles , the thorns were pretty sharp so they would protect them from any threats. Graystripe was the first one to fall asleep as his dark gray fur was pressed against Fireheart's , while Cloudpaw and Brightpaw were as usual sleeping together in the same nest.

Creampelt had a nest of her own but all kits were cuddled against her warm belly as she wrapped her fluffy tail around them in a protective manner. Fireheart watched this with a smile on his face and Creampelt seemed to notice because she looked back at him with a warm smile. The two of them looked at their comrades who were all sleeping peacefully , snoring softy or loudly in Graystripe's case."Goodnight Fireheart~" the large cream furred molly whispered gently to the bright-flame colored tom who responded back softy "Goodnight Creampelt".

At this, the Queen putted her head on her front-paws , closing her eyes with a soft sigh before soon falling asleep. Fireheart staid awake for a moment as he watched the stars but then he lowered his head down before closing his eyes and let tiredness overpowering him. However, he was unaware of what will happen that night.

He saw himself in a strange cave he never saw before. He smelled the air and recognized the smell that Creampelt had on her fur. The smell of Skyclan . He wanted to speak but a mewl escaped from his own mouth and when he looked down at himself , he wanted to yowl in shock at what he saw : his legs were shorter than usual and even if he was standing on his full size, it seemed that his nose was barely a tail-length from the ground.

He understood the situation instantly as he suddenly froze with a look of stupor on his face"I'm a kit ?!" The bright flame pelted tom wanted to yell in panic when he saw a large form (front his new perspective) shifting beside him.

By the scent Fireheart could tell that this form belonged to a she-cat . When the strange female turned her head toward him , the fire pelted tom wanted to yowl in shock : her face was completely hidden by something gray and black. The only detail of her face Fireheart could see was her eyes : amber colored eyes.

Beside the face, the former Thunderclan Warrior could see the fur covering the molly : she had a bright ginger fur with darker stripes on her back while her underbelly was cream in color. Fireheart was about to ask her who she was when another cat entered the cave and he turned his head to see another molly but unlike the other one, the newcomer had a pale brown fur and blue eyes. Sadly, just like the ginger she-cat , her face was hidden by the same gray and black thing.

Suddenly , everything around him became black. He flinched when a loud wail of distress echoed around him. Fireheart , still in kit's form, mewled but was met with silence until two gigantic forms appeared in front of him. The flame pelted tom recognized those forms : Two-Legs. One of them had its paws lowered toward as if it was about to pick him up and the moment he was about to, Fireheart woke up.

Panting, he looked around making sure he didn't disturbed the others' sleep. Thankfully, everyone remained asleep even if Graystripe shifted a bit when Fireheart had a moved a bit. Sighting silently, the bright-flame colored tom lowered his head down again before closing his eyes hoping that it was the last time he would have such a strange dream.

(End of Flashback)

Since that first night, he had the same exact dream. Well...Not all night... Sometimes he had it and for 4 nights he didn't. It happen when it wanted to. Anyway, now days later, Fireheart still couldn't understand what his dream . However his thoughts were interrupted by Graystripe who asked " Fireheart ! Are you okay ?"

The bright-flame pelted tom looked at his longtime friend with an apologizing look on his face "Sorry I was just thinking..." "Let me guess... Thinking about what will happen when we will FINALLY find this Skyclan ?" the dark gray tom inquired softy as he eyed Creampelt still leading them. Fireheart knew that his friend was still skeptical about Skyclan's existence but the dark gray tom wisely

chose to not speak what he had in mind in front of Creampelt who would surely be angry at him.

"Yes..." The bright-flame colored tom replied after a moment of silence. Of course, he was not entirely lying but he didn't wanted to disturb his friends with his dreams. " Let's hope they won't try to tear our fur off... I don't want to to fight but if they attack us I will ! " Graystripe mumbled as he clenched his teeth. Fireheart nodded in understanding " I don't know what will happen once we find them but let's just pray Starclan that everything will be fine..." he said in a solemn tone which earned a nod from his longtime friend.

After that the trip was pretty in silence and even the kits , which were usually excited and always eager to play, were staying still (which Fireheart was glad). They had understood that this trip wasn't a game and for their young age, they were taking things pretty seriously especially Goldenkit. The three kits had successfully managed to catch their first preys a fews days ago which made Creampelt ,Graystripe and himself really proud.

Featherkit and her brother got a mouse while Goldenkit managed to catch a sparrow. The trio were really proud of their first catch and one of them couldn't stop talking about it : Stormkit. *"Like father like son..."* Fireheart thought with amusement that day. Cloudpaw and Brightpaw grew much closer during that time and everyone noticed the way they wrapped their tails together. Graystripe and Fireheart exchanged an amused look on their faces each time it happened as it was obvious that those two were becoming more than just 'best friends'.

Soon the silence of the group was interrupted by a yowl from the distance. Fireheart , as well as everyone , listened carefully and his emerald green eyes widened as realization entered his mind : a cat was in danger. " Quick !" Creampelt inquired as she ran toward where the sound came from leaving no choice to the others but to follow her.

As they came closer and closer, the faint yowl they heard previously was becoming more distinct but with hisses of anger. Soon they arrived where the noises came from and they all growled : a large fox was standing in front of a brown she-cat with deep blue eyes

with a white underbelly and neck who was hissing at him aggressively , claws unsheathed. At her side was a younger cat , a black tom who seemed as old as an recent-made apprentice. The young black apprentice seemed scared as it was maybe the first time he saw a fox.

Fireheart looked at Creampelt who looked ready to jump in " Do you know them ?" he asked her softy and he saw her looking at him "Yes the brown molly is my friend Weaselpelt...the black apprentice...I don't know him..." Fireheart nodded before looking at Cloudpaw and Brightpaw "You two ! Stay here and watch the kits !" "What ?! Why ?" his nephew asked as his blue eyes looked at his mentor with bewilderment "Because I need someone to look after them and because I gave you the order !" Fireheart responded strictly as his green eyes looked at his apprentice with harsh glare.

Cloudpaw seemed ready to argue but , thankfully, he gave up "Alright..." he muttered grumpily. Brightpaw looked at the flame pelted tom calmly " We won't disappoint you.." Fireheart nodded respectfully before rushing toward the Fox at full speed, his sharp claws ready for the fight. Creampelt and Graystripe quickly followed , equally ready.

As the Fox was about to strike his cornered targets, Fireheart pounced and savagely clawed the red canine's muzzle. The Fox turned around to face him only to receive a terrible claw-strike on its side from Graystripe which caused the Canine to back away. When Creampelt approached it in a menacing manner , hissing threateningly , the Fox knew it couldn't fight against so much opponents so it ran away with its tail between its back-legs.

Fireheart and Graystripe pursued the fox for a short distance to make sure he it left for good before walking back toward Creampelt who was talking with the brown molly "Creampelt ! Is it really you ?!" The brown she-cat asked with joy in her blue eyes "Yes Weaselpelt... I am back !" The large cream furred Queen purred in delight as the two friends embraced each other.

"Where were you ? We were worried ! " Weaselpelt asked her large friend with a frown "Two-Legs captured me after Yellowpelt died saving me..." Creampelt began to say in a sad tone before looking at

Graystripe and Fireheart "And some cats helped me to come back~"

The two former Thunderclanners had staid silent as the two mollies talked but when Creampelt mentioned them, they stepped closer but stopped at a respectful distance of the brown and white molly who was looking at them gratefully "Thank you for bringing her back ! But who are you ?" "My name Fireheart and this gray fur-ball here is my friend Graystripe.." the bright-flame colored tom responded calmly but grinning at his comrade who was looking back at him with a playful glare.

The two mollies' whiskers twitched with amusement before Creampelt looked back at her brown friend "I had a kit with Yellowpelt... Her name is Goldenkit~" "Really ?! Where is she ?!" Weaselpelt asked her large friend , squealing like a kit. Creampelt giggled amusingly at her friend's antic before responding "She is with Brightpaw , Cloudpaw and Graystripe's kits..."

At this answer, the brown and white molly blinked in confusion as she looked back and forth between the two toms and her friend "There are more strangers on our territory ?! " Fireheart hurriedly stepped in "Yes Cloudpaw is my apprentice and nephew and Brightpaw is his best friend..." "Future mate if you ask me.." Graystripe muttered with a grin which caused the fire pelted tom to look at him with a grin of his own.

The black apprentice had staid silent the whole time as he seemed a bit wary of those strangers and he flinched when Creampelt looked at him "Hey I think we didn't met yet..." "Oh right ! Its Crowpaw my apprentice !" Weaselpelt said in a proud tone and the young black tom seemed embarrassed. "Congratulations !" Creampelt inquired as her sky blue eyes looked back and forth between her friend and the apprentice.

Fireheart looked at Crowpaw and nodded respectfully which caused the younger tom to calm down a little " Mama ! Fireheart !" a familiar squeal echoed and everyone turned their heads to see Goldenkit approaching them at full speed along with Stormkit , Featherkit, Brightpaw and Cloudpaw. The pale yellow she-kit went toward her mother who gave her a gentle lick on the forehead before looking at Weaselpelt " you wanted to meet my daughter

right ? Well here she is~" "Awwwww she is so cute !" the brown and white molly cooed as she looked at the small she-kit who purred in delight at the praise.

Stormkit and Featherkit, for their parts, had rushed toward their father and where currently pinning him down on the ground . Graystripe couldn't stop laughing as he felt his kits on him and playfully batted them with his large paws. Fireheart watched with a smile before he felt something against his front paws and looked down to see Goldenkit. Chuckling, the bright-flame pelted tom lowered his head to nuzzle the kit's forehead earning a purr of content from her.

Crowpaw looked at Brightpaw and Cloudpaw with curiosity as he slowly approached them. "Hi...I'm Crowpaw..." he greeted the two shyly "Hey I'm Cloudpaw , Fireheart's apprentice !" the young white tom responded softy even if he was a bit suspicious about this stranger. "I'm Brightpaw... Nice to meet you Crowpaw..." the white and ginger apprentice greeted the black tom in a friendly tone which caused Crowpaw to smile at the two.

Weaselpelt watched everyone for a moment before looking back at her large friend "So who are they ? Why do they have Clan-names ?" Creampelt looked at the brown and white molly with a calm face " I will explain everything later...But first can you take us to Skyclan's camp ?" Weaselpelt seemed hesitant for a moment but soon, sighed "Alright..." she said softy but couldn't hide the excitement at the thought of the greetings the large cream furred molly would receive from her Clan-mates.

Creampelt looked at Fireheart and the bright-flame pelted tom saw the joy and excitement in her sky blue eyes. Then he looked at the others : Stormkit and Featherkit had released their father and were right now standing at his sides and the apprentices (Crowpaw included) was waiting for the signal to go. Graystripe seemed a bit nervous and Fireheart would be lying if he said he wasn't but he had to stay strong.

He looked at Weaselpelt and he noticed her unsure look on her face as she looked at everyone. "I know we just met but I can assume you that we are not here to cause any problem.." Fireheart spoke in

a calm and convincing tone which caused the brown and white molly to calm down a little as her muscles relaxed "I see the sincerity in your eyes... I trust you..." The bright-flame colored tom nodded respectfully in response.

"Alright everyone follow me !" Weaselpelt inquired as she trotted away quickly followed by Creampelt , Fireheart and the rest of the group. As he walked, the fire pelted tom looked at his comrades : Graystripe was standing near Stormkit and Featherkit like a protective shadow while Cloudpaw , Brighpaw and Crowpaw were walking side by side , chatting with each other. *"They would be good friends..."* Fireheart thought to himself with a smile before looking at Creampelt who was shivering from excitement at the thought of seeing her Clan-mates...her family again after so long.

Fireheart was happy for her but it was still a bit worried : Will Skyclan's Leader accept them ? Or will they drive them out of their territory because they were once members of Thunderclan ? The bright-flame colored tom shook his head to get rid of those thoughts : whatever will happen , they would all be ready.

(To be continue...)

Chapter 7 : Skyclan !

Fireheart and the rest of his group were still following Weaselpelt as she leaded through Skyclan's territory. The brown and white molly was currently chatting happily with Creampelt and the fire pelted tom decided to leave them alone. He was glad that their journey was over but deep inside him, he was still worried that Skyclan would drive them out because they were once members of Thunderclan, one of the four Clans who chased their ancestors out of the Forest Territories Moons ago.

He looked toward his longtime friend, Graystripe, who looked back at him with the same look of worry in his yellow eyes. Brightpaw and Cloudpaw were too busy chatting with Crowpaw (Weaselpelt's apprentice) to notice their elders' look while the kits were looking around in amazement. After all, the group were passing near an abandoned barn which looked completely deserted. " What is that place ?" Featherkit asked as she looked at the destroyed building with curiosity.

" Two-Legs used to live there but one day they left.... It was abandoned since then...until rats came..." Creampelt explained gently to the silver she-kit before Weaselpelt added proudly "They tried to kill our ancestors but we managed to defeat them all !" "Rats are a pain for all Cats..." Fireheart added calmly and the brown and white Skyclan Warrior nodded at him before leading the group away.

" Skyclan suffered a lot..." The bright-flame pelted tom turned his head to see his best friend muttering to himself " They were kicking out of the forest by the Four Clans... had to travel for a long time... fight off rats..." Graystripe muttered softy and thankfully, Weaselpelt was out of earshot. Fireheart approached his longtime friend before nudging his shoulder with his nose "I know... and I won't blame them if they became hostile to us..." The dark gray tom nodded in agreement.

They walked for a few minutes before reaching a place that left them speechless . Weaselpelt and Creampelt saw their surprises and pure in amusement "Welcome in Skyclan !" the brown and white molly said as she looked at her home. Fireheart's wide green eyes examined the place with attention : in front of them was a deep rocky gorge where a stream was trickling through it.

There were also many caves which was maybe used by Skyclan's members as Dens or refuges.

There was also a tall rocky clutter of stones at the center of the gorge and the bright-flame pelted tom was wondering what is served for. The entire group could see some cats passing before their eyes and they were wondering who was Skyclan's Leader and Deputy. "Come on follow me !" Weaselpelt inquired as she started to enter the gorge followed by her apprentice Crowpaw who stopped chatting with Cloudpaw and Brightpaw.

The former Thunderclan's members were a bit hesitant but Creampelt looked at them encouragingly "Everything would be fine...I assume you~" Goldenkit then looked at her mother expectantly "Can you carry me please Mommy ?" "Of course dear~" the large cream furred molly purred as she picked her daughter up by the scruff of her neck before beginning to climb down the gorge.

Fireheart looked at Graystripe who had picked up his daughter Featherkit in his mouth and gently , the flame colored tom lowered his head down to pick up Stormkit. The dark gray tom blinked at his longtime friend gratefully before the two made their way down the gorge quickly followed by Cloudpaw and Brigthpaw.

However as the group approached, a white she-cat mewled loudly which caused the others cats present to look at the coming newcomers. Instantly, the Skyclan Warriors formed a defensive line between the intruders and the Queens , Kits and Elders, hissing menacingly. The air was suddenly really tense as the two groups were looking at each other , waiting.

Fireheart understood that they were waiting for their Leader's order and gestured for his comrades to stay calm. Suddenly, a large gray tom with amber eyes stepped out of the line of hissing felines to

look at a certain brown and white molly "Weaselpelt what is the meaning of this ? Why did you brig rogues into our camp ?!" he asked her in a stern tone.

Weaselpelt looked at him calmly but her ears were pressed against her skull "Those cats are no threats to us ! They saved my life as well as my apprentice !" she replied and the Skyclan's Cats began to murmur among themselves. " And Creampelt has returned !" the brown and white molly added cheerfully which caused her Clan-mates to became joyful as the large cream furred molly approached them.

Instantly, Creampelt found herself surrounded by her Clan-mates who were cuddling her , purring loudly in delight. Some of them noticed Goldenkit, who was trying to make herself look small, and were asking her who the kit was. "Everyone ! Goldenkit is my daughter along with Yellowpelt !" Creampelt explained to her Clan-mates who all congratulated her as they were trying to have a good look at the pale yellow she-kit.

Goldenkit became more nervous and dashed toward Fireheart before hiding behind his front-paws. The bright-flame colored tom looked down at the kit with amusement before looking back at the Skyclan's members who were looking at him and his group suspiciously. "Welcome back Creampelt !" a new voice echoed in a welcoming way and some cats bowed in respect when a pale gray she-cat with green eyes appeared.

The Skyclan Warriors backed away as the newcomer approached Creampelt with a warm smile on her face. "Dovestar ! Its good to see you again !" The large cream furred shet-cat said as she bowed with respect and Fireheart understood that this she-cat was Skyclan's Leader. She looked strong and she seemed to have an aura of authority around her. "Where were you during all this time Creampelt ? We all thought you were dead..." the pale Leader asked her seriously.

Creampelt sighed before explaining " My mate Yellowpelt died to protect me from a fox and I was captured by some Two-Legs... I was forced to become a Kittypet... Then Goldenkit was born..." she looked at her daughter , still hided behind Fireheart's front-legs,

with warmth " Then some cats appeared and helped me to come back home~" Creampelt looked at the bright-flame colored tom and his group with a soft smile as she said those words.

Dovestar nodded and turned her head toward Fireheart and his comrades with a grateful smile "Thank you for your help but who are you ?" Graystripe stepped closer before nudging his longtime friend with his muzzle " Come on ! You are better than me for explanation !" Fireheart gave him a blank look before sighing in defeat. Then the fire pelted tom bowed respectfully in front of the pale gray she-cat " My name is Fireheart... The dark gray tom here is my best friend Graystripe...the white tom is my nephew and apprentice Cloudpaw...and the white and ginger she-cat is Brightpaw...Stormkit and Featherkit are Graystripe's kits ..."

At the mention of their names, the three other former Thunderclanners , along with the kits ,bowed their heads in greeting which Dovestar returned "You all have Clan-names... How can that be ?" the pale gray molly asked with a frown which caused Fireheart to looked at Creampelt nervously. However when the large cream furred molly gave him an encouraging smile, he breathed deeply before looking back at Dovestar " We were once members of a Clan....but we were exiled by our leader Tigerstar..."

At this answer, some Skyclan' Cats became agitated until Dovestar called for silence. When the Clan calmed down, the pale gray molly looked back at the bright-flame pelted tom "Which clan you belonged and why were you exiled ?"

She asked him in a calm tone. Fireheart took a deep breath before answering calmly "We belonged to Thunderclan..." At those words, Skyclan Warriors yowled in anger which caused the former Thunderclanners to flinch in fear.

"Thunderclan Filth !" someone yelled in the assistance and Fireheart instinctively unsheathed his claws and Graystripe was standing in front of his kits in a protective manner as his yellow eyes glared at the Skyclan Cats challengingly. Cloudpaw had his body pressed against Brightpaw's , also glaring at the Skyclan Warriors.

But before the situation could became worse, Creampelt went to

stand with Fireheart "Stop ! They might be from Thunderclan but they are not responsible for what their ancestors did to us !" the large molly snarled as her sky blue eyes looked at her Clan-mates with hostilely. Those words caused every cats to go deep in thought until Dovestar stepped in "Indeed we shouldn't judge cats for what others did... Now..." the pale gray she-cat looked back at Fireheart with a frown "Tell me why you were all exiled... Did you do something wrong ?"

Creampelt blinked gratefully at her Leader before nodding at Fireheart with a smile. The bright-flame colored tom was surprised that Skyclan had calmed down so quickly but he pushed his thoughts away as he responded " Thunderclan's Leader Tigerstar banished us for different reasons... Me and Cloudpaw were exiled because we were once kittypets... He exiled Graystripe because he had kits with a Riverclan Warrior..."

Some Skyclan Cats were looking at the dark gray tom with wide eyes but none of them seemed disgusted by this revelation as they all staid silent. " He allowed us to take the kits because , and I quote, ' I don't want those filthy Half-clan kits to live in Thunderclan ' !" At those words, murmurs of disgusts were heard from the gathered cats and even Dovestar seemed furious but all of them let Fireheart talking.

"Brightpaw decided to join us in exile... and later we met Creampelt..." the bright-flame colored tom added as he looked at the large cream furred molly who smiled warmly at him before adding " She nursed Graystripe's kits until they were strong enough to eat prey and then we decided to help her find her home..." When he finished talking, Dovestar went deep in thought for a moment before saying " What this Tigerstar did was unacceptable ! Those kits were innocent from what their parents did !" she stopped to take a deep breath before adding "But I think there is another reason for him to exile you am I right ?" the pale gray she-cat asked with a raise-brow.

Graystripe then decided to speak for the first time "You are right...There is more... " Dovestar looked at him calmly but Fireheart could see the curiosity in her green eyes " Me and Fireheart had discovered some secrets back when we were

apprentice : Tigerstar, Tigerclaw back there, had killed our Deputy , Redtail, in cold-blood during a fight with Riverclan... He tried to kill our former Leader Bluestar many times to take her place... He tried to kill his own apprentice Ravenpaw and we helped him to leave Thunderclan to save him..."

As the dark gray tom spoke, Fireheart saw the horror in the Skyclan Cats' eyes and he added "He led a group of rogues into our camp 2 moons ago and he..." the bright-flame colored tom stopped as he lowered his head down in sadness and sorrow. "He killed Bluestar... he said a rogue did it but me and Fireheart knew the truth.... Tigerclaw became Thunderclan's new Leader and you know the rest..." Graystripe said to the gathered Cats as he pressed his shoulder against his longtime friend who still looked sad as he remembered Bluestar.

The air was silent as Skyclan members were processing what those two just told them. " I'm sorry for what happened to you...all of you..." Dovestar said gently

as she looked at the former Thunderclanners before her green eyes landed back on Fireheart "You seem more affected by your Leader's Death young cat...Is there a reason ?"

The bright-flame colored tom looked up at her with sadness still clear in his eyes "Bluestar was my mentor and a good friend... I miss her..." "We all did..." Graystripe added as he looked at his best friend with the same look of sorrow he had. Brightpaw then stepped closer "It is possible for us to join your Clan ?" she asked the Skyclan Leader hesitantly. Cloudpaw flinched visibly at his friend's question and Graystripe and Fireheart did the same but less visible than the white apprentice.

The Skyclan Warriors seemed surprised by the apprentice request and they murmured among themselves until an old brown tom with dark brown stripes and amber eyes inquired " Dovestar ! Those cats helped Creampelt to come back home with her kit and saved Weaselpelt's and Crowpaw's life... We are in their debt and it would be foolish to turn them out after what they did ! They could be useful to our Clan !"

When the Elder finished talking, a murmur of agreement echoed from his Clan-mates. Dovestar looked at her Warriors then at the former Thunderclanners before calling " Hawkfeather !" At this call, a large gray tabby tom with amber eyes approached the Skyclan Leader before bowing respectfully at her. Dovestar looked at her Clan-mates "I need to discuss this with my Deputy and the Senior Warriors ! I will reveal my decisions in a moment..." then she walked away followed by Hawkfeather and two others Warriors : a white molly with amber eyes and a black tabby with green eyes.

Fireheart staid there along with his comrades and the Skyclan Warriors. Then Creampelt approached them "I hope Dovestar will accept you..." "Me too...But if they want us to leave then we will..." the bright-flame colored tom whispered as Graystripe was cuddling his kits while Cloudpaw and Brightpaw were chatting with Crowpaw who joined them. "I would be sad if you leave..." Creampelt whispered softy almost to herself as she pressed her large body against Fireheart's smaller one.

The bright-flame colored tom sighed in content and gently thanked her which earned a purr from the large cream furred molly. The Skyclan Cats noticed their comrade's behavior and some had their whiskers twitching with amusement especially the Queens and Elders. "Strange... Brownleaf , Russetpelt, and Kestrelfeather aren't here..." Fireheart heard the larger molly whispering as she looked around. " Are they friends of yours ?" he asked her gently and she looked down at him "Yes Kestrelfeather is our medicine cat... Brownleaf and Russetpelt are Warriors... "

Fireheart nodded in understanding and gently used his tail to rub is against Creampelt's side "Don't worry I'm sure they are fine... Maybe your medicine cat got out to look for herbs ?" the cream furred molly beside him nodded "Yes...maybe..." then she gently licked the top of his head " Thank you for comforting me..." "Anytime Creampelt..." the fire pelted tom whispered gently with a purr but then he noticed the grin on Graystripe's face.

The dark gray tom couldn't stop thinking that Creampelt and Fireheart were more than 'just friends'. The bright-flame pelted tom blushed under his fur before glaring at his longtime friend whose whiskers twitched with amusement.

Fireheart groaned in annoyance at the dark gray tom's antic as he decided to look around : Cloudpaw and Brightpaw were talking with Crowpaw and two other apprentices. The first one had a gray and white fur with blue eyes while the second one was a tortoiseshell with green eyes. The two of them were mollies but the gray and white furred on seemed older and ready to become a Warrior at any moment now.

Looking away from the apprentice, Fireheart watched as the Skyclan Warriors were giving him friendly looks and he couldn't help but being surprised : earlier they looked ready to tear them apart when he told them they were once members of one of the Clans who chased their ancestors of the Forest Territories moons ago and now they were acting friendly.

Of course, he was glad they weren't mad at them anymore but he never thought they would accept them so quickly ! Shaking his head, Fireheart saw some kits approaching Stormkit , Featherkit and Goldenkit and watched them with interest : there were 2 toms and three mollies. The first tom had a pale gray fur with darker stripe and golden eyes while the second tom had a normal gray pelt and the same eyes' color.

The three mollies for their parts looked to have the same age..2 moons old by the look... the first one had ginger first but darker than Fireheart's and pale green eyes. The second she-kit had a dark gray fur and a single white paw with blue eyes. The last one had a black fur and leaf-green eyes. She had a white spot on her chest. Fireheart watched as the five kits approached them cautiously , their eyes locked on Stormkit, Featherkit and Goldenkit.

They stopped in front of the bright-flame colored tom and the black furred she-kit asked in a shy tone "Do you want to play with us ?" Goldenkit seemed hesitant and looked up at Fireheart "Can I ?" the fire pelted tom nodded and instantly, the pale yellow she-kit stepped away from behind his front-legs to approach the newcomers.

Stormkit and Featherkit approached them as well and Fireheart understood that Graystripe allowed them to play. The two former Thunderclan Warriors watched as the kits started to play moss-ball

and couldn't help but purring in amusement. Fireheart then saw Creampelt talking with Weaselpelt along with two other Cats he didn't know : the first one looked like Creampelt but older while the second one was a brown tabby tom with green eyes who was just as old.

"Well...At least we still have our pelts..." Graystripe's voice echoed behind him and the bright-flame colored tom looked at his best friend with a grin " Yes... Now I hope Dovestar would let us join her clan..." " Yes so I won't have to deal with a devastated tom..." Graystripe replied with a mischievous look on his face. This comment caused Fireheart to blush madly under his fur "What this suppose to mean ?! " The dark gray tom smirked deviously at this question and the flame pelted tom understood instantly "How many times do I have to tell you that me and Creampelt are just friends ?!"

"You can say that many times but I know its not true..." Graystripe responded deviously and his friend stared blankly at him for a second before sighing "I hate you sometimes..." he groaned lowly as he stepped away. Sadly, he could hear his longtime friend snickering behind him and groaned in annoyance before looking at Creampelt.

He had to admit she was a wonderful she-cat : strong, caring, kind-hearted, friendly... She was the perfect molly and any toms would be lucky to have her as their mate. But for some reasons, he felt like he wasn't worthy enough for her...like she deserved better than a former kittypet as her mate. Sighing, he decided to stay still and wait for Skyclan Leader's decision.

(To be continued...)

Note : I created Skyclan's members in this stories and I hope you will like them ! After chapter 8 I will do the allegiance so you could meet the entire Skyclan

Chapter 8 : Acceptance and Family Reunited

After a long time of discussion , Dovestar re-appeared along with Hawkfeather and the other two . She looked serious as she walked through the crowd before jumping on a pile of boulders where the river appeared. Then the pale gray she-cat with green eyes said in a loud tone " ***Let all cat old enough to catch their own prey join here beneath the Rock-pile for a Clan meeting!"***

At those words, the entire Clan approached the pile along with Fireheart and his group and when everyone were sitting around the Rock-pile, Dovestar said those words " I talked with my seniors Warriors and we came to an agreement..." the pale gray she-cat looked first at Creampelt then at the former Thunderclanners with a calm look on her face " Creampelt ! Are you sure your friends can be trusted ?"

The large cream furred molly nodded without hesitation "They are Dovestar ! One more than the others though～" Creampelt responded as she eyed Fireheart with a warm smile. The bright-flame pelted tom looked away in embarrassment and this behavior earned a soft chorus of snickers coming from the crowed cats especially from Graystripe and Cloudpaw.

Dovestar's whiskers twitched with amusement before replying "Well then... Those Cats are free to join us as full members of Skyclan !" then the pale gray she-cat looked at Fireheart and Graystripe "Both of you are already Warriors... But you are free to either change your name or keep it..." "In memory of my mentor Bluestar I humbly to keep my name !" the bright-flame colored tom responded without hesitation as his green eyes looked up at Skyclan's Leader with a solemn look on his face.

" I want to keep my name as well ! In respect for my mentor Lionheart !" Graystripe inquired as he looked up at Dovestar

solemnly but with a hint of sadness in his yellow eyes. Hearing the name of his friend's mentor, Fireheart felt a pang of sadness as he remembered the golden tabby tom with his thick fur which looked like a Lion's mane. The bright-flame pelted tom remembered the Golden Warrior's kindness and his wisdom.

Sadly the old Warrior died during an attack of Shadowclan back when he and Graystripe were apprentice. He looked at his friend with sympathy knowing that the dark gray tom missed his mentor as much as him. Dovestar nodded her head in respect at their choices "Alright then... Cloudpaw ?" she asked as she looked at the young white tom with blue eyes " You are Fireheart's apprentice right ?" When Cloudpaw nodded, she added with a soft smile as she saw the worry in the young tom's eyes " Ten you can keep your mentor... "

At those words, Cloudpaw sighed in relief while Dovestar's green eyes landed on Brightpaw " I assume you are Graystripe's apprentice ?" The white and ginger apprentice shook her head in denial "No... My mentor was a senior Warrior named Whitestorm..." the young molly responded shyly " Well then... I have to give you a new mentor then..." Dovestar inquired softy as she looked at her Clan-mates.

" ***Lynxclaw ! You are ready to take an apprentice as you have received an excellent training from Hawfeather and you have shown yourself to be cunning and strong ! You will be the new mentor of Brightpaw and I expect you to pass on all you know to that apprentice !"*** Dovestar said solemnly after a moment of silence . When she finished talking, a large beige-white furred molly with dark brown spots slowly approached Brightpaw. The white and ginger apprentice seemed a bit scared of the newcomer but she quickly calmed down when the Skyclan Warrior smiled gently at her "Don't worry I won't bite~" Lynxclaw inquired with a playful wink.

More relaxed, Brightpaw touched her new mentor's nose with her own and all Cats cheered them loudly until Dovestar lifted her tail to demand silence. When everyone calmed down, the pale gray she-cat looked at the former Thunderclanners with a smile "Welcome in Skyclan !" she told them solemnly and the four former Thunderclan

cats bowed their heads respectfully at her.

Then all Skyclan Members approached them to congratulated them. Fireheart was touched by this gesture and cleared his throat to get everyone's attention

" Thank you Dovestar for allowing us to join your Clan ! I promise to be loyal to you and my new Clan-mates !" the bright-flame colored tom's eyes landed instinctively on Creampelt and he felt warmth inside him when he saw the proud look she was giving him.

"Thunderclan is not the Clan we known anymore ! We belong to Skyclan now !" Graystripe added as he looked at his new Leader and Clan with determination in his yellow eyes. Brightpaw purred in happiness as she pressed her body against the snow fur of Cloudpaw who licked her face gently in response. Graystripe and Fireheart , again, exchanged an amused look on their faces before looking at their new Clan-mates who were surrounding them with friendly faces.

The Skyclan Warriors didn't seemed to hold a grudge against those cats , once former members of one of the Forest Clans who chased them many moons ago , anymore and Fireheart thanked Starclan for that. Creampelt then approached him along with the other large cream furred molly he saw her talking with earlier and greeted them respectfully. The large she-cat looked at him with warmth before gesturing to the Older molly with her bushy tail " Fireheart this is my mother Sandpelt... " "Its a pleasure to meet you Sandpelt... " the bright-flame colored tom said softy as he bowed his head at his friend's mother "The pleasure is mine young cat ! Welcome into our Clan ! I hope you will like it here..." Sandpelt replied in a rasped tone showing her age.

Fireheart nodded and Creampelt said with a grin " I have to leave you alone for a while ! Snowpelt wanted to tell me something !" before the fire pelted tom could respond, the large cream furred Queen trotted away to approach a she-cat with white fur and amber eyes. Now he was alone with Sandpelt and he was a bit nervous. The Elder cat seemed to notice because she letted out a purr of amusement "Don't worry I won't eat you..." she chuckled a bit under her fur before asking "So... Do you like my daughter ?"

The question caught him off guard as he didn't expecting it but he quickly regained his composure as he responded " Creampelt... is an amazing she-cat... Strong, caring, friendly... I do like her..." Sandpelt seemed enchanted by his answer as she purred softy " She seems to like you...a lot..." the Old molly pointed out calmly and Fireheart , hearing this, blushed madly under his fur. "I know she do but... I think she deserve better than me..." he whispered softy almost to himself but sadly, Sandpelt heard him.

"Why are you saying this ?" The large cream furred Elder asked him with a frown and he was abut to answer when someone called " Finally you are here !" It was Hawkfeather's voice. Everyone turned their heads to see the large gray tabby tom looking at something in the distance. Fireheart then saw three mollies approaching : the first one had a pale brown fur with small black spots and deep blue eyes. She was carrying some bundles of plants and the bright-flame colored tom understood that this molly was maybe Skyclan Medicine cat , Kestrelfeather.

The second molly had equally a pale brown fur but without spots and green eyes while the last one had a bright ginger fur with darker stripes on her back along with ambers eyes. Those two surprised Fireheart greatly : they were the she-cats of his dreams ! Before he could think more about this , Dovestar's voice echoed " Welcome back you three !" The three newcomers bowed respectfully in front of their Leader when their eyes landed on a certain large cream furred Queen " Creampelt ? You are back ?!" Kestrelfeather said as she approached the larger molly with a purr

"I am Kestrelfeather ! And we have new members~" Creampelt responded as she looked at Cloudpaw, Brightpaw , Fireheart and Graystripe. The Medicine Cat looked at the four " Oh ? Welcome in Skyclan then I'm-" She was interrupted by a gasp of shock coming from the stripped bright ginger she-cat. Everyone looked at her as she was approaching Fireheart with wide eyes "Russetpelt ! You interrupted me !" Kestrelfeather pointed out angrily but the surprise still evident in her tone.

The bright ginger she-cat, Russetpelt, ignored her as she stopped in front of Fireheart before asking in a shocked tone "Jake ? Is that you ?" The bright-flame pelted tom was taken aback by this but

soon recovered from his surprise to mumble " My name is Fireheart.... Jake was my father...from what I heard at least..."

Russetpelt's amber eyes widened "You look definitely like him that's for sure...the same pelt....the same beautiful green eyes..." Fireheart was growing embarrassed and asked with a frown "How do you know my father ?" the bright ginger molly sighed deeply " He helped me and my mate to have something we always wanted..." she pointed at Brownleaf when she said the word 'mate'.

Even if he was a bit surprised about two mollies being mate, he was more interested by what his father did for them so Fireheart couldn't retain himself as he asked with some curiosity " What did he do ?" Russetpelt chuckled at his question "You're as curious as him... To answer your question I must ask you something first ..." she inquired seriously and Fireheart could hope in her amber eyes "What is it ?" the bright-flame colored tom asked her with a raise-brow. "Do you remember us ?" she asked as she gestured for Brownleaf to come over.

Fireheart glanced at Creampelt who seemed just as confused as him as well as everyone present " I don't think I ever saw you before now ... " he responded her with a frown. His answer caused the two mollies before him to sigh in sadness "We should have guessed you wouldn't remember us... The last time we saw you...you were a small kit barely old enough to walk..."

Fireheart was growing more and more suspicious about those two as he looked at them " You knew me....as kit ? How ?!" His question seemed to sadden then even more. Russetpelt then looked up at him with a calm tone but the sadness still evident in her amber eyes "You may have forgot us..." Brownleaf then stepped in "But mothers never forget..."

At this answer, Fireheart backed away from them with a look of total shock on his face " What ?! You...you are..." he mumbled quickly as his mind was processing what he just heard "Yes Fireheart... Me and Brownleaf are your mothers..." Around them, the gathered Cats were all silent as shock were shown on all faces even Graystripe's , Cloudpaw's and Brightpaw's.

But no one was as shocked as Fireheart himself : he finally now understood the meaning his dreams. There weren't just dreams ...there were memories ! "If what you are saying is true then...How did I end up in Two-Leg Place ? Why you didn't look for me ? " Fireheart asked them with a hurt tone as he glared accusingly at them.

" We did look for you !" Brownlead replied back hurriedly in an attempt to calm him before Russetpelt spoke " We loved you very much ! What happened that day was an accident !" Fireheart looked at them both with a glare : the two mollies seemed desperate. He decided to give them a chance and so he breathed deeply to calm down. "What happened ?" he asked them softy as he looked up at the two with a much more calm behavior.

Russetpelt looked at her mate who nodded back at her " A Warrior of our clan... my father... Darkfur... kitnapped you when you were out of our sight... We chased him and he never told us what he did with you... " the stripped bright ginger molly responded as she looked at her 'son' with sorrow and a bit of anger. At the mention of this 'Darkfur' , some Skyclan Warriors were muttering in disgust.

"What happened to him ?" Fireheart asked them with a curious raise-brow "Was he exiled ?" Brownleaf was the one who responded to him with a look of disgust on her face "No... He got a far better punishment..." Blinking, the bright-flame colored tom looked at Dovestar who had a stern look on her face "Kitnapping is punishable by death !"

The former Thunderclanners all flinched at those hard words. Fireheart shook his head to clear his mind as he looked at his 'mothers' who were looking back at him with pure sadness in their eyes "If we had learn about where you were... We would have come to get you back..." Brownleaf whispered softy and Russetpelt nodded in agreement before adding " We would have done everything to have you back..."

The sadness in their tone broke the bright-flame pelted tom's heart and he sighed as he came closer. Then he pressed his head against Russetpelt's and he could hear her purr of delight as she started to lick his ears lovingly. Brownleaf smiled and followed her mate's

example as she pressed her body against her son's.

The bright-flame colored tom closed his eyes as he savored the love coming from his mothers and sighed deeply in content as he purred softy. Around them, the gathered Cats were all watching the scene with a smile on their faces and some Queens were cooing at how cute they were. Graystripe was happy that his friend found his family as was Cloudpaw and Brightpaw. Creampelt was smiling at them as well along with Goldenkit , who was standing at her paws.

After a moment of cuddling, the two mollies broke the embrace as they looked at their son with proud which Fireheart felt warmth inside his chest "You've grown so much... You're a handsome tom now..." Brownleaf whispered as she looked at him warmly " Yes we are so proud of what you are now~" Russetpelt adeed as she nodded in agreement with her mate's comment

The bright-flame colored tom was beginning to feel embarrassed and , again, thanks to his fur color , no one could see he was was blushing. The two mollies giggled in amusement before their eyes landed on Fireheart's comrades "And who are you ?" the pale brown she-cat asked them gently but with a dead glare which caused them to flinch in fear. Russetpelt was equally looking at them with a sharp look in her amber eyes.

Graystripe looked at his friend for help and the bright-flame colored tom nodded as he placed himself between his mothers and his comrades " The white tom is my apprentice and nephew Cloudpaw" Fireheart pointed at the white apprentice who bowed his head respectfully at them. In response, he got a gently nod from the two "The white and ginger she-cat is Brightpaw.." Brownleaf and Russetpelt nodded to the apprentice who nodded back at them " and the gray fur-ball over there is my best friend Graystripe..." Fireheart said as he pointed at the dark gray tom with a playful grin on his face.

Graystripe glared playfully back at him , hissing. Brownleaf's and Russetpelt's whiskers twitched his amusement just like every cats present. Kestrelfeather decided to step in " As I said before being interrupted..." she began to say as she sent a fake look of anger to Fireheart's mothers before resuming " Welcome in Skyclan ! But

where did you get your Clan-names ? Did we missed the ceremony ?"

Fireheart flinched and was about to respond when Dovestar " Later for that ! For now let's just celebrate the new members of our Clan with a feast !" All Cats cheered their Leader's decision as they all went away to take a piece of food. Creampelt showed her friends where was the fresh kill pile and each other them picked up some preys : Fireheart took a mouse, Cloudpaw and Brightpaw decided to feast on a rabbit , Graystripe picked up a vole while the large cream furred molly chose a plump rabbit.

As the five of them were eating together, some cats decided to join them : Weaselpelt , Russetpelt , Brownleaf and Crowpaw. The black apprentice had taken a vole and decided to eat with Cloudpaw and Brightpaw who welcomed his company. Weaselpelt crouched near Creampelt before attacking her lunch ,a mouse. Russetpelt and Brownleaf , for their parts, decided to eat their rabbit near their son.

Fireheart purred a greeting at them as he feasted on his mouse. But between some bites , Brownleaf asked gently "So where did you get your name son ?" The bright-flame colored tom glanced at Graystripe who seemed wary before sighing "Its a long story..." he began to say before relating them everything that had happened after he joined Thunderclan.

When he finished, Fireheart wasn't surprised when the look of horror on their faces. But quickly , the horror turned into anger "How dare he ?! If Tigerstar was here right now I would rip his head off !" Brownleaf snarled furiously which caused the cats present to flinch in fear " Count me in ! No one tried to kill my kit and get away with it !" Russetpelt added angrily , much to Fireheart's embarrassment.

Graystripe's whiskers twitched with amusement and the bright-flame colored tom glared at him before looking back at his mothers " I can defend myself ! I am not a kit anymore !" Brownleaf and Russetpelt looked at him with a glare which caused him to close his mouth instantly " You might have grown but you are still our kit !" the pale brown molly inquired as she looked at him sharply but still

in a soft manner. " We had lost you once ! Never again !" Russetpelt added with a look of determination in her amber eyes.

Knowing he couldn't won this fight, Fireheart sighed in defeat "Why those things always happen to me ?" he mumbled almost to himself but sadly a certain dark gray tom heard him "Maybe because you are an unlucky cat..."

Fireheart glared at him playfully " I might be unlucky but at least I never ran after a she-cat for like MOONS ! " he shouted back to his longtime friend who hissed at him , playful. " You're the one to talk !" the gray tom shouted back as he looked back and forth between Fireheart and Creampelt with a devious grin on his face.

The large cream furred molly blushed madly under fur as did the bright-flame colored tom " Graystripe !" Fireheart yelled loudly before pouncing on his friend. As the two were fight-faking, they didn't noticed that all Skyclan were watching them. Dovestar was about to stop them when Russetpelt inquired "They are just playing..." The pale gray Leader looked at the fighting cats then at Cloudpaw and Brightpaw "Are they always like this ?" When the two nodded , Hawkfeather approached with an amused look on his face "Well.... It seems we won't get bored with these two ..."

All Cats laughed at this remark and all of them returned to their own business as the sun was starting to decline. Creampelt , for her part, was still processing what Graystripe had said earlier and couldn't help but smiling internally. She wouldn't mind having Fireheart as her mate... He was handsome , strong, caring , patient...

Russetpelt and Brownleaf watched their son fighting with his friend with a smile on their faces before looking at Creampelt "You know... You and Fireheart would make a lovely couple～" the stripped bright-ginger molly inquired with a smile. Creampelt looked back at her " I do love him....but what if you doesn't ?!" she asked them with a bit of worry as she tried to keep her voice down " Seeing how he reacted to Graystripe's comment... He must secretly love... He might be too shy to admit it... " Brownleaf remarked with a smile.

" You know how mouse-brained toms are around us ,she-cats~" Russetpelt added with a playful grin which caused the three of them to giggle in pure amusement. Creampelt then looked back at Fireheart ,who had pinned his friend down, with a smile. Maybe one day...him and her would be together... She hoped it to happen.

(To be continued...)

Skyclan Allegiance

- Leader :

Dovestar – pale gray she-cat with green eyes

- Deputy :

Hawkfeather – large gray tabby tom with amber amber eyes

- Medicine Cat :

Kestrelfeather – pale brown furred she-cat with deep blue eyes and small black spots

- Warriors :

Weasepelt – brown and white she-cat with deep blue eyes *(Apprentice : Crowpaw)*

Lynxclaw – large beige furred molly with dark brown spots and yellow eyes. *(Apprentice : Brightpaw)*

Snowpelt – white molly with amber eyes *(Apprentice : Mistpaw)*

Nightfur – black tabby tom with green eyes *(Apprentice : Spotpaw)*

Browleaf – pale brown furred she-cat with green eyes

Russetpelt – bright ginger furred she-cat with darker stripes and amber eyes

Foxclaw- dark ginger tom with yellow eyes

Addereye – tortoiseshell tom with green eyes

Darkcloud- gray tom with amber eyes

Fireheart – bright-flame colored tom with emerald green eyes ;

former Thunderclan Warrior (*Apprentice : Cloudpaw)*

Graystripe – dark gray tom with yellow eyes and a stripe of darker gray fur running down his back ; former Thunderclan Warrior

- **Apprentices :**

Cloudpaw – white tom with blue eyes

Brightpaw – ginger and white she-cat with blue eyes

Crowpaw – black tom with green eyes

Mistpaw – gray and white she-cat with blue eyes

Spotpaw – tortoiseshell she-cat with green eyes

- Queens :

Creampelt – large cream furred molly with sky blue eyes

Robinfeather – dark ginger molly with yellow eyes

Sweetwhisker : silver tabby molly with amber eyes

Ambershine – amber molly with sky blue eyes

- Elders :

Mudfur – brown tom with darker stripes and amber eyes

Maplefur – tortoiseshell she-cat with green eyes and a dappled coat

Brownclaw – brown tabby tom with green eyes

Sandpelt – large cream furred molly with sky blue eyes

- Kits :

Sootkit – gray tom with golden eyes

Darkkit – pale gray tom with darker stripes and golden eyes

Foxkit – dark ginger she-cat with pale green eyes

Whitekit – dark gray she-cat with a single white paw and blue eyes

Nightkit – black she-cat with a white spot on her chest and leaf-green eyes

Chapter 10 : Confession

Fireheart woke up with a soft yawn as he slowly got up from his nest. Stretching his body , the young tom padded out of the Warriors' Den to look at the camp. Days passed since Dovestar , Skyclan's Leader, allowed him and his group to join her Clan and since then, Life had been kinda peaceful for the former Thunderclanners.

Graystripe's kits , Stormkit and Featherkit, became close friends with the others kits especially to Foxkit and Sootki. Their mother Ambershine , a pretty amber molly with sky blue eyes, was always eager to let her kits play with them. The others Queens , Robinfeather and Sweetwhisker, acted the same with their respective kits.

Robinfeather was a dark ginger molly with amber eyes who was the mother of a cute little dark she-cat with leaf-green eyes named Nightkit. Sweetwhisker, for her part, was a silver tabby molly with amber eyes who mothered Darkkit, a pale gray tom with darker stripes and golden eyes.

Goldenkit , Creampelt's daughter, grew equally accustomed to life in Skyclan and was loved by everyone. Still, she was still acting shy around others except for Fireheart , Graystripe , Cloudpaw , Brightpaw , Stormkit and Featherkit. Despise having friends to play with, the small yellow she-kit sometimes played with the bright-flame colored tom and he never complained as he always had time for this little furball he grew to love as if she was his own daughter.

Cloudpaw and Brightpaw , for their parts, managed to befriend some Skyclan apprentices particularly Crowpaw , Weaselpelt's apprentice. The fire pelted tom was glad the three got along so well as he remembered his own time as apprentice. Seeing those three reminded him of all the good times he had with Graystripe (Graypaw back there) and Ravenpaw.

Fireheart sighed deeply in nostalgia as he missed this time of happiness and recklessness. Shaking his head to clear his mind, he decided to look around. Dovestar was eating a vole near Snowpelt , a white molly with amber eyes , and Nightfur , a black tabby tom with green eyes. Both of them were senior Warriors and Fireheart grew to respect them as they reminded him of Whitestorm back in Thunderclan.

Not too far, a group of 4 Cats was leaving the gorge surely for patrolling the territory. During the first days, Fireheart and his group (less the kits) get to explore the new area thanks to both Weasepelt and Creampelt. Speaking of the brown and white molly, she became close with both Graystripe and the bright-flame colored tom as she got to know them a little better.

The Skyclan Cats seemed to like them and Fireheart was still surprised by this as he remembered that the Four Clans had 'exiled' them from the Forest Territories. Only two Cats still didn't fully accepted them : Darkcloud (a gray tom with amber eyes) and Foxclaw (a dark ginger tom) . Each time, they came near them, they barred their teeth menacingly , hissed at them or simply muttered insults. Now , the two of them tried their best to avoid the former Thunderclan Warriors. Why ? Because one day , Graystripe got mad and attacked them out of anger.

Of course, Fireheart went to help his longtime friend and fought against Foxclaw while Graystripe took care of Darkcloud. The whole Skyclan Cats surrounded them to watch the fight but it quickly stopped when a certain pale gray she-cat with green eyes stepped in. At the sound of her voice, the fighters stopped dead in their tracks , glaring at each others. Fireheart and Graystripe were standing side by side , their furs covered in dust and some claw-marks.

Darkcloud and Foxclaw received more wounds that they gave. The two bullies were standing before their adversaries , panting loudly. Dovestar had lectured all of them sternly but , when Addereye (a tortoiseshell tom with green eyes) explained the reason of the fight , the Skyclan Leader punished Darkcloud and Foxclaw by having the two of them take care of the Elders for a full moon.

Fireheart and Graystripe , for their parts, were forgiven for attacking their Clan-mates as they had reason to do it. Since that day, the rest of Skyclan respected them more as they proved to be worthy opponent. This went as far as asking the two to teach them some new battle-moves.

It had been days since that happened and Fireheart was happy that he and group had found a new home. He couldn't help but thinking about how would be their life if Tigerstar hadn't banished them. A growl erupted from his throat when he remembered the dark brown tabby tom... the one who killed his beloved mentor and Leader... Even now the bright flame pelted tom blamed himself for not being there to protect Bluestar and swore to never fail another friend this way.

Shaking his head to get rid of those sad thoughts, Fireheart approached the fresh kill pile , picked up a plum rabbit and a vole before trotting toward where the Queens usually sleep. He silently entered the cave and found the she-cats laying in their nest. Some of them were still sleeping along with the kits still pressed against their soft bellies.

The bright-flame colored tom tiptoed toward Creampelt as the large cream furred molly was still resting in her nest with Yellowkit , Featherkit and Stormkit sleeping against her tummy. Gently, Fireheart deposed the rabbit down near Creampelt's muzzle before leaving the cave, carefully avoiding stepping on someone's tail.

Back outside, the bright-flame colored tom approached the fresh kill pile again but this time to take his OWN meal. As he lowered his head down to pick up a vole, a familiar large gray tom with amber eyes approached him from the corner of his eyes. " Hawkfeather..." Fireheart welcomed the newcomer as he bowed in respect. The Skyclan Deputy bowed his head in response "Hello Fireheart... I want you to go with Weaselpelt and Crowpaw in the midday patrol along with Graystripe and your apprentice..."

The bright-flame furred tom nodded in understanding and watched as the large Deputy walked away. Hawkfeather was a bit older than Whitestorm and soon he would join the Elders. Fireheart then picked up his vole before walking toward Graystripe who was

feasting on a sparrow. His longtime friend mewled a welcome before returning to his meal... but not before giving him a mischievous look.

Instantly, Fireheart understood that Graystripe must have seen him bringing a rabbit to the Nursery and sighed deeply in annoyance. The dark gray tom believed that he and Creampelt were in love for each other and , despise the many attempts to tell him it was not the case, Graystripe was still believing it.

"Hawkfeather wanted you , me and Cloudpaw to join the midday patrol with Weaselpelt and Crowpaw..." Graystripe nodded " You know... We might living in another Clan but... its kinda like in Thunderclan... Some cats are nice , some playful, some annoying, and some...normal I dare say..." Fireheart snorted in amusement at the last comment but nodded his head regardless " I agree with you but still... I miss the old Thunderclan..."

"You mean the one before this fox-heart of *Tigerstar* took over or when we were still apprentice ?" Graystripe asked his longtime friend with a playful raise-brow. " Well... maybe a bit of both ?" the fire pelted tom responded with a grin and the two shared a laugh.

Then Fireheart saw Brightpaw walking beside her mentor Lynxclaw , the large beige furred molly with dark brown spots and yellow eyes. The two formed a strong bond together and Lynxclaw also became a good friend to Fireheart and Graystripe. As the two mollies approached them , the bright-flame colored tom was the first one to greet them "Hello you two ! Training session I presume ?" " Hello and yes ! Brightpaw is becoming a true Warrior !" the beige molly responded with a note of proud in her voice as her yellow eyes landed on her apprentice who looked away shyly in embarrassment.

" At this rate, she will a Warrior in no time !" Graystripe commented with a smile and his longtime friend nodded in agreement. Brightpaw smiled at them in a thankful way "We should go now... See you later !" Lynxclaw said as she and her apprentice left. The two toms watched them leave before finishing their meals. However before they could get up, someone called for them. Turning their heads , they saw Yellowkit , Featherkit and Stormkit running

toward them. Fireheart laughed when Creampelt's daughter pounced on him and he could hear Graystripe's own laugh when his kits jumped on him.

The bright-flame colored tom gently pushed her off him before facing her "Hello Yellowkit already excited ?" The pale yellow she-kit pressed her tiny body against his chest , purring. In return, he licked the tom of her head. Yellowkit then looked up at him " Fireheart can you play with us pleeeeeeeeaaaaaaaaase ?" she pleaded him cutely and , with a smile, the former Thunderclan Warrior nodded. Yellowkit squealed in delight before pouncing on him.

What they didn't know was that someone was watching them with a warm smile on her face. It was none other than Creampelt who was now fully awake. When she opened her eyes, she saw a plump rabbit in front of her and , after smelling it, she understood that Fireheart was the one who brang it to her. Of course, the second she got up, Yellowkit, Stormkit and Featherkit jumped on their paws ready to go play.

But first they had to get a bath and , of course, Stormkit hated it so he tried to escape but in vain...To make it worse, he was the first one to get the bath. Featherkit and Yellowkit laughed at his predicament as they always loved bath-time. When everyone was clean , Creampelt allowed them to go out and quickly purred in amusement when the trio dashed away at full speed.

Chuckling to her kit and adoptive kits' antics, the large cream furred molly stepped out of the Nursery to see Fireheart and Graystripe laughing as three fur-balls were laying on them. This sight always warmed her heart and ,like always, she couldn't help but gazing at a certain fiery pelted tom with green eyes. Those eyes which seemed to sparkle under the sun and this orange which looked like a raging fire under the sunlight.

Creampelt admit it to her mother Sandpelt that she loved Fireheart dearly. Brownleaf and Russetpelt , Fireheart's mothers, also knew about this and ,thankfully, gave her their blessing if the two of them became mates. The large cream furred molly , however, was scared that her 'crush' didn't loved her back and in fact, only saw her as

nothing more than just a friend.

"You should tell him you know..." a voice echoed behind her and Creampelt turned her head to see Ambershine and Sweetwhisker looking at her with a smile on their face. "Tell who what ?" Creampelt asked them with a confused raise-brow. This question earned a purr of amusement from the two other Queens "Don't act like you don't you ! We saw how you look at him !" Sweetwhisker remarked as she gestured her tail toward Fireheart at the word 'him'.

Creampelt blushed madly under her fur at this comment and sighed in defeat as she knew that she couldn't won this fight " Alright... you won but what should I do ? Just walk to him and say 'Hey Fireheart ! You know what ! I love you !' ?" she asked the other two with a sad frown. Ambershine used her tail to caress her friend's side " No of course not...But.. You should just talk with him when the two of you are alone..." "He needs to know how you feel about him..." Sweetwhisker added gently as she went on Creampelt's other side.

"I know I know but I'm afraid..." the large cream molly whispered almost to herself "Afraid of what ?" Ambershine asked her with a raise-brow "I'm afraid he don't love me back..." Creampelt responded in the same tone that previously. " If he didn't loved you , do you really think he would bring you prey when you are sleeping ? Or taking care of your daughter when you are busy ?" another voice echoed which caused the three mollies to turned their head.

In front of them was none other than their Leader Dovestar who had a gentle look of compassion on her face. Creampelt quickly shook away her surprise to think about what the pale gray she-cat just said and it was right. Fireheart had always showed her nothing but kindness and willingly accepted to help raise Yellowkit (which she was grateful for). Thinking about it, she remembered his reaction to Graystripe's comments days ago.

But if he DO love her , why didn't he said nothing ? What he scared ? Or was it something else ? Shaking her head, Creampelt looked back and forth between her Leader , Sweetwhisker and Ambershine

before smiling "You are right... I have to tell him... I need to know if he love me... and why he didn't say anything if its the case ?"

Dovestar nodded solemnly with a smile before walking away while Sweetwhisker and Ambershine returned in the Nursery to wake their kits. Now alone, Creampelt's sky blue eyes looked back at Fireheart still playing with her daughter and thought about the best way to tell him how much she loved him.

Fireheart was walking side by side with Graystripe as the two followed Weaselpelt to the way back to camp. Crowpaw and Cloudpaw, the other members of the patrol, were at the back of the group chatting to each other. The two of them became good friends and were always (almost) seen side by side.

The patrol went uneventful as they weren't any Clans around to bother them much to their relief. The only problems were either Two-Legs , natural predators such as Foxes or Falcons or simply rogues. Thankfully, they encountered neither of those dangers and the group managed to catch some preys on the way back.

Of course, the elder members of the group were the ones dragging the catch to leave the two apprentices talking to each other. As the group approached the gorge where Skyclan resided, they encountered another patrol lead by Snowpelt who saluted them before leaving.

The five Cats slowly climbed down the rocks and were instantly greeted by Hawkfeather "Welcome back ! I see you bring some preys for the pile..." the large gray tabby tom remarked with his usual smiling face. "Indeed ! The apprentices had done well ! They would be seen ready to become Warriors !" Fireheart remarked as he bowed his head respectfully at the Clan Deputy.

"Good to hear ! Now place your catch in the fresh kill pile and take something for yourselves... Then you can rest..." the five Cats thanked him and approached the pile. They deposed their catch (2 voles, a rabbit, a squirrel, a sparrow and a woodpecker) before some preys for themselves but ,the moment Fireheart was about to pick up a mouse, someone called for him . Turning his head, he saw his mothers approaching.

Fireheart looked at them with a smile but he was wondering what they wanted. Those two were EXTREMELY protective of him (much to his chagrin) but he knew he couldn't do anything against it. After all, he understood their reason and he couldn't blame them. They lost him when he was barely a kit and they didn't wanted to feel the same sadness and sorrow that back there.

From the corner of his eyes, he couldn't see Graystripe's whiskers twitching in amusement and he glared at him. The dark gray tom smirked as he piked up a rabbit before walking away. Fireheart stared at him with annoyance before approaching his mothers. Russetpelt fondly licked the top of his head in a motherly manner while Brownleaf pressed her body against her son's .

Like always, the bright-flame colored tom melted to their touch and even let out a soft purr. After a moment of cuddling, the two mollies backed away before sitting with a firm expression on their faces which caused Fireheart to become a bit worried. "Is there something wrong ?" he asked them hesitantly.

His mothers staid silent for a moment before Brownleaf asked "Fireheart do you love Creampelt ?" The question surprised him and he stood there with a shocked look on his face but he quickly regained his composure " Why do you ask ?" "Answer the question... and no lie ! I can tell if you do !" Russetpelt inquired with a firm tone which caused him to flinch.

Fireheart sighed as he whispered "I do but... she deserve better than me..."

The second he said those words, Russetpelt's nose was pressed against his.

Russetpelt and Brownleaf looked at each other while their son had his head hanging down in sadness. He blinked when he felt a paw lifting his chin and he looked up to see Russetpelt looking at him sternly " Why are you thinking this way ?"

Fireheart's eyes showed uneasiness as he looked back and forth between his mothers. Brownleaf looked back at him with the same stern look that her mate as she watched. After a moment of silence,

the bright-flame colored tom sighed in defeat "I wasn't able to protect Bluestar from Tigerstar... I wasn't able to prevent Cinderpelt from being cribbed... I am a failure... I am not strong enough to protect those I love..."

"You are absolutely NOT a failure Fireheart !" Someone remarked behind him and he turned his head to see Sandpelt , Creampelt's mother, approaching them with a firm look on her face. Fireheart staid silent as he looked away in embarrassment. But then a bushy tail appeared under his chin before lowering his head to face the Elder who looked back at him with compassion.

"You are not a Failure young cat ... You did your best to protect your leader and it wasn't your fault if she died... If Starclan decided it was her time then we cannot do anything against their will..." the Old molly explained gently to him while keeping a firm expression on her face. "She is right Fireheart... " Brownleaf inquired as she licked her son's cheek.

"And about being not strong enough you are wrong..." the pale brown molly added as she looked at him dead in the eyes. " Yes... You are loyal, patient, and loving... That what make you a good Warrior... and a good cat..." Russetpelt said with a smile as she gazed at her kit.

Fireheart staid silent for a moment as his mind processed what they told him. They were right but deep down, he still felt partially responsible for Bluestar's death as well as Cinderpelt's accident. Then his mind showed him the TRUE responsible for those events : Tigerstar. If its wasn't for him, none of this would have happened. After a long time of thinking, the bright-flame colored tom looked back at the three mollies in front of him.

"You are right... I shouldn't blame myself for what Tigerstar did... It was his fault and only his... " Fireheart said with an assured tone. Russetpelt and Brownlead smiled as they pressed their bodies against their son's. Sandpelt then added "I think you should talk with Creampelt... She was waiting for you~". Fireheart flinched at those words and sighed in defeat as he knew he couldn't avoid this. " Yes... I should...No... I must do it..."

"That's my boy~" Brownleaf purred proudly which earned a fake look of indignation from her mate "Hey he is my son too !" Sandpelt mewled in amusement while Fireheart seemed more embarrassed than ever. "You should go now... " the Old Molly inquired him as she walked away back to her den. Russetpelt and Brownleaf licked his face one more time whispering comforting words before doing the same.

Fireheart watched them go before looking back at the camp. Soon he spotted Creampelt looking at him and he gestured with his tail that he wanted to talk to her. The large cream molly slowly approached him and as she stepped closer and closer, the bright-flame colored tom was becoming nervous.

When Creampelt stopped in front of him she asked "Do you need something Fireheart ?" The flame pelted tom took a deep breath before saying "I have something to tell you..." "What is it ?" she asked him with curiosity. Fireheart then gathered all his courage to say " Creampelt... I love you..." The large cream furred molly froze in surprise as her cheeks reddened. " I loved you since the first time I saw you... but... I thought you deserved better than me... so I said nothing... I thought I was failure because I wasn't able to protect the ones I loved..."

Creampelt listened with wide eyes of shock and when he stopped , she staid silent which worried Fireheart dearly. " I thought you deserved to know... I understand if you are angry at me... I wouldn't blame you for it either...I think I should leave you alone now..." the flame colored tom said the last part as he noticed the shock in her eyes.

He was about to walk away when Creampelt stopped him "Oh no you don't !" she pinned him down by pressing her paws against his shoulder. Then she lowered her head down to lick his ears and whispering "I love you too Fireheart~". It was Fireheart's turn to be shocked. His surprised state seemed to amuse the large molly as she purred fondly "You are so cute Fireheart ! Didn't you noticed how nice I was toward you since day one ?" she asked him with a fond smile.

Fireheart sighed as he shook his head with amusement. He DID

noticed but he only thought she was acting like because she just wanted to be nice. The truth was different. "Creampelt... Do...do you want me to be your mate ?" he asked her hesitantly earning a happy gasp from the large molly who instantly licked his face and ears repeatedly "Yes ! I want this more than anything Fireheart~"

Creampelt then let him get up before the two of them pressed their bodies against each other , purring in content. Not too far from there , Sandpelt , Russetpelt and Brownleaf were watching the scene with warm smiles on their faces. They were proud of their kits and knew that now the two would be a great couple.

(To be continued...)

Note : sorry for the delay. I decided to take a break after publishing the Allegiance... But now I'm back ^^

Chapter 11 : Ceremonies and Surprise

Two moons passed since Fireheart and Creampelt declared their loves for each other and recently became official mate. Of course, the whole Skyclan was happy for the two especially Russetpelt, Brownleaf and Sandpelt. Goldenkit , for her part, was overjoyed to hear that and even started to call Fireheart 'Daddy' much to his surprise and joy as he loved this little fur-ball.

Graystripe was also really happy for his best friend even if it wasn't a surprise for the two to become mate. When the lovers announced the new, the dark gray tom teasingly shouted " Finally ! You sure took your time !" Of course, the entire Clan had laughed at this little joke except the lovebirds who glared at him.

At the same time , Mistpaw (Snowpelt's apprentice) , a gray and white molly with blue eyes , received her Warrior Name and was now known as Mistfur. The new made Warrior looked proud of her achievement but Fireheart had noticed the look of sadness when she looked at her old den-mates.

Speaking of apprentices, Crowpaw , Brightpaw and Cloudpaw were soon ready to become Warriors and their mentors planned to test them one last time before speaking to Dovestar, the Clan Leader. Two kits were also old enough to become apprentice : Darkkit and Nightkit. Darkkit was a pale gray tom with darker stripes and golden eyes while Nightkit was black she-cat with a white spot on her chest and leaf green eyes.

The first one was Robinfeather's son and the latter was Sweetwhisher's daughter. Fireheart was wondering to himself who will be their mentors. Of all the Warriors only Addereye, Brownleaf, Russetpelt, Foxclaw, Darkcloud and Graystripe were available. The bright-flame colored tom hoped that those two would never become Foxclaw and Darcloud's apprentices as they would surely be trained

to hate the former Thunderclanners.

Right now the bright-flame colored tom was eating a rabbit next to Graystripe who was feasting on a vole. The dark gray tom just came back from a morning patrol with Snowpelt and Addereye along with Mistfur. Fireheart , for his part, was about to talk with Weaselpelt and Lynxclaw about their apprentices. He was confident that the trio were trained enough to be Warriors as it had been a long time since they became apprentice. (note : Crowpaw had the same age than the other two).

The fiery pelted tom was proud of his apprentice : he had caused him many problems in the past but he was a courageous and loyal cat. Princess , his sister, would be proud of her son and Fireheart's heart clenched in sadness. He loved his adoptive family (Nutmeg and Princess) and he missed them greatly.

Shaking his head to get rid of those thoughts, he looked over at Graystripe who just finished his vole " What are you going to do now old friend ?" The dark gray tom looked at him "Well... I think I will watch my kits for a while..." he responded almost nonchalantly. Graystripe always staid around his kits even when they were Queens to watch them. The dark gray tom refused to let them out of his sight for too long.

Fireheart understood why he acted like this and he couldn't blame him. Graystripe was still heart-broken by Silverstream's death and he didn't want to lose someone he loved again. The bright-flame colored snorted amusingly to himself when he remembered that his longtime friend acted the same when he and Silverstream were dating behind everyone's back moons ago.

"What about you ?" Graystripe asked him curiously before adding teasingly "Will you pass some time with your girlfriend ?～". Fireheart's cheeks reddened at those words but he glared at his longtime friend whose whiskers twitched in amusement "I DO hate you sometimes ! But no... I have to speak with Lynxclaw and Weaselpelt..."

THAT took Graystripe's curiosity as he asked with a raise-brow "What for ?" "I think our apprentices are ready to become

Warriors... but I need their opinions before sharing this with Dovestar..." Fireheart responded as he saw the two mollies eating not too far from them. " Cloudpaw , Brightpaw and Crowpaw are more than ready.... They are excellent hunters and fighters now !" Graystripe remarked with a smile.

"Yes now if you excuses me, I have to go ! See you later !" the bright-flame colored tom said to his best friend before trotting away. But before he could get far, he heard the dark gray tom saying teasingly "Watch out ! Your mate might become jealous to see your with other mollies~". Fireheart grunted in annoyance but he kept walking, swearing to himself that he would get back Graystripe for this comment. As he approached them, Weaselpelt and Lynxclaw took notice of him and greeted him gently "Hi Fireheart do you need something ?" the brown and white molly with deep blue eyes asked him softy. "I just wanted to talk about Cloudpaw, Brightpaw and Crowpaw..." the fire pelted tom responded in a calm tone.

"Why ?What did they do ?" Lynxclaw looked at him with confusion in her yellow eyes "Nothing really... I was thinking that they were now ready to become Warriors but... I wanted to hear your opinions about your OWN apprentices..." Fireheart responded in the same calm tone than earlier. Lynxclaw and Weaselpelt sighed in relief at those words as they thought the young cats did something wrong. "I think they are ready... Brightpaw doesn't need more training as she is a capable fighter and hunter..." the spotted brown molly responded with a proud look on her face.

"Crowpaw is ready as well ! He might not be the strongest but he is swift and cunning... and a decent hunter at that~" Weasepelt added with a smile of her own. Fireheart nodded in acceptance "Well then... It seems we are all agree... We should see Dovestar now..." He inquired as he and the two mollies walked toward the Skyclan Leader who was talking with Kestrelfeather, the Medicine Cat.

The three mentors approached their Leader who interrupted her talk with Kestrelfeather to look at them. Fireheart, Lynxclaw and Weaselpelt bowed in front of the pale gray molly who greeted them back calmly "Dovestar can we talk to you ?" the brown and white molly asked her Leader who nodded at them before looking at the

Medicine Cat " We will continue later..."

Kestrelfeather nodded and trotted toward her den leaving the four cats behind not before sending a discrete glance to Fireheart who didn't noticed it "Alright what do you want to talk about ?" the pale gray Leader asked the trio with some curiosity after a moment . The three mentors eyed each other before Fireheart responded "Dovestar... We think our apprentices are ready to become Warriors..."

The pale gray she-cat's green eyes eyed him for a moment before looking at Weaselpelt and Lynxclaw who both nodded in agreement. Dovestar closed her eyes for a moment and when she re-opened them, she declared that the ceremony would be held later in the day just before the apprentice ceremony of Nightkit and Darkkit. The three mentors bowed their heads in thanks to their Leader before walking away to tell their apprentices the news.

Of course, Cloudpaw , Brightpaw and Crowpaw were overjoyed to hear this. Spotpaw , Nightfur's apprentice, was happy for her den-mates but she was a bit sad because she would be the only apprentice of the Clan. Fireheart , who never liked to see cats sad, gently told her that she won't be alone for long. The little molly thanked him and went back to congratulated her friends.

Fireheart then left the apprentices celebrating to approach the nursery where he saw Goldenkit, Featherkit and Stormkit playing moss-ball with Sootkit, Foxkit, Nightkit, Darkkit and Whitekit. Creampelt and the others Queens along with Graystripe were watching them with fond smiles on their faces. As the bright-flame colored tom approached, Creampelt noticed him and let out a purr on content but before she could say something, someone beat her to it "DADDY !"

Fireheart smiled when he saw Goldenkit racing toward him and chuckled in amusement as the she-kit nuzzled his forelegs, purring loudly in content and delight . Then he lowered his head down to lick the top of her heard. Goldenkit purred in response before looking up at him pleadingly "Daddy can you play with us please ?"

The bright-flame colored was about to respond when Featherkit and

Stormkit , along with their friends approached him before giving him the cute kitten eyes. Their mothers cooed at their adorable faces and , the bright-flame colored tom was trying to fight against their cuteness. Soon he responded calmly "Sorry little ones I can't right now... "he stopped when he saw their deflected looks and soon added "But you know what ? I need you for something.." "What is it ?" Whitekit asked him curiously.

Fireheart grinned deviously before saying "I need strong Warriors for an important mission : there is a Shadowclan Cat here and we have to chase him..." "Where is he ?! " Sootkit asked loudly in excitement. The bright-flame colored tom pointed at a certain dark gray tom with his tail "Here he is !"

The second he said those words, all kits pounced on Graystripe who yelped in shock as he felt the kits' weight landing on him. All Queens laughed at the poor tom predicament and Creampelt added in a fake stern tone "That was a dirty move Fireheart ! What was that for anyway ?"

The fiery pelted tom looked at her with a grin "Call this a personal revenge... " the large cream furred molly snorted in amusement before pressing her body against his, purring. Fireheart returned the gesture before saying "Cloudpaw, Brightpaw and Crowpaw are about to become Warriors..."

Creampelt looked at him with surprise and happiness "Really ?! Its a great new !" He nodded in agreement and looked at the other Queens "Nightkit and Darkkit will be made apprentice after the Warriors Ceremony !"

Robinfeather and Sweetwhisker purred in happiness at the news "Great Starclan ! Its about time ! Those two are becoming too big to stay here !" the silver Queen said with a hint of humor and everyone snickered in amusement.

"Do you know who will be their mentors ?" Robinfeather asked him gently and Fireheart shook his head in response "I don't know... I just hope they won't end up with Foxclaw and Darkcloud..." he muttered the last part with a soft growl. The Queens nodded in agreement as no one really seemed to like those two anyways.

"HELP ME !" Graystripe's voice echoed as the dark gray tom tried to escape his attackers. Fireheart snickered as he stood there, watching his longtime friend struggling under a wave of kits. Soon the whole Skyclan watched the scene with pure amusement and some even laughed at their Clan-mate's predicament.

After a moment of 'torture' , Creampelt thought it was enough and ordered the kits (in a gentle tone) to let go of the poor 'Shadowclan cat'. The kits awed in protest but they obeyed as they returned to play moss-ball again. Meanwhile, Fireheart helped his friend to get up and the dark gray tom glared at him "A Shadowclan cat huh ?!" he muttered with both amusement and annoyance. The bright-flame colored tom grinned at him before responding "That for teasing me earlier !"

Graystripe groaned as he walked away from his friend who stood there with a grin before approaching Creampelt who instantly licked the top of his head in a soothing manner. Fireheart purred as he laid down before the two shared tongue while the kits were playing.

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"***Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey join here beneath the Rock-pile for a Clan meeting !"***

Dovestar's call echoed in the gorge and every cats gathered around the Rock-pile. All of them knew what was going to happen at those sort of things didn't stay hidden for long. Cloudpaw, Brightpaw and Crowpaw were at the center of the gathered cats , standing proudly.

Fireheart was sitting near Creampelt and Graystripe while their kits were sitting peacefully at their paws. Not too far, Robinfeather and Sweetwhisker were licking their respectives kits who looked annoyed by this.

"Today we are here to made Warrior of three apprentice so Cloudpaw , Brightpaw and Crowpaw please step forward !" Dovestar said as her green eyes looked at the apprentices. Everyone could see the excitement in their eyes but they managed to hide it.

The pale gray Leader waited until they were close enough to said the ritual words *" I, Dovestar , leader of Skyclan, call upon my warrior ancestors to look down on this apprentices. They have trained hard to understand the ways of your noble code, and I commend them to you as a warrior in their turn !"*

Dovestar first looked at long white furred apprentice with a serious look on her face *" Cloudpaw , do you promise to uphold the warrior code and to protect and defend your Clan, even at the cost of your life?"*

" I do" Fireheart's apprentice responded with determination in his voice.

" *Then by the powers of Starclan, I give you your warrior name. Cloudpaw, from this moment on you will be known as Cloudtail ! StarClan honors your courage and your strength , and we welcome you as a full warrior of Skyclan !"*

Dovestar stepped forward and pressed her nose on Cloudtail's forehead and he licked her shoulder in response before sitting near his mentor, Fireheart who looked at him with a proud look on his face. The Skyclan Leader then looked at the black apprentice *" Crowpaw , do you promise to uphold the warrior code and to protect and defend your Clan, even at the cost of your life?"*

Weaselpelt's apprentice looked at his Leader with a fire of calm and determination as he responded "I do ". Nodding in acceptance, Dovestar resumed *" Then by the powers of Starclan, I give you your warrior name. Crowpaw , from this moment on you will be known as Croweye ! StarClan honors your cleverness and your speed, and we welcome you as a full warrior of Skyclan !"*

Like she did with Cloudtail, Dovestar gently putted her muzzle on the new Warrior's forehead and he licked her shoulder in response before sitting near his mentor who, just like Fireheart, looked proudly at him. The pale gray Leader then turned her attention to the last apprentice and staid silent for a moment before saying " *Brightpaw , do you promise to uphold the warrior code and to protect and defend your Clan, even at the cost of your life?*

The white and ginger apprentice seemed nervous but she managed to respond in a calm tone "I do". Dovestar gave her a smile to calm her down before resuming " ***Then by the powers of Starclan, I give you your warrior name. Brightpaw , from this moment on you will be known as Brightheart. StarClan honors your kindness and your compassion, and we welcome you as a full warrior of Skyclan !"***

Dovestar pressed her nose against the young Warrior's head and just like the others, Brightheart responded by licking her shoulder before sitting near her mentor, Lynxclaw. The whole Clan cheered the new Warriors as they yelled their names

"CLOUDTAIL ! BRIGHTHEART ! CROWEYE !"

The whole Clan were stopped cheering when Dovestar lifted her tail to demand silence and inquired that the new Warriors must set a vigil tonight before adding "Now its time for two of our kits to become apprentices ! Nightkit and Darkkit please step forward !"

At the mention of their names, Darkkit approached his Leader with excitement while Nightkit was much calmer than her friends. When they were standing before her, the pale gray Leader started to talk " ***Nightkit ! You have reached the age of six moons, and it is time for you to be apprenticed. From this day on, until you receive your warrior name, you will be known as Nightpaw ! Your mentor will be Addereye !. I hope he***

will pass down all he knows to you !"

The chosen Warrior approached his apprentice who looked at him with eagerness ***" Addereye ! you are ready to take on an apprentice. You had received excellent training from Nightfur, and you have shown yourself to be cunning and strong ! You will be the mentor of Nightpaw , and I expect you to pass on all you know to this apprentice !"***

Mentor and apprentice touched noses with each other before stepping away. Fireheart could see the young apprentice bombarding her new mentor with question which amused him greatly. Now it was Darkkit's turn to be apprenticed.

" ***Darkkit ! , you have reached the age of six moons, and it is time for you to be apprenticed. From this day on, until you receive your warrior name, you will be known as Darkpaw ! Your mentor will be Brownleaf ! I hope she will pass down all she knows on to you !"*** Dovestar said as she gestured for the pale Brown molly to step forward.

Russetpelt was congratulating her mate who looked surprised to be chosen but still, approached her apprentice who looked at her with nothing but pure excitement. ***" Brownleaf , you are ready to take on an apprentice. You had received excellent training from Snowpelt and you have shown yourself to be courageous and loyal. You will be the mentor of Darkkit and I expect you to pass on all you know to your apprentice !"***

The two touched noses and instantly they were cheered by everyone in the Clan "DARKPAW ! NIGHTPAW! DARKPAW! NIGHTPAW!"

The new-made apprentices were happy that their got their new names and their families and friends went to congratulate them. Fireheart watched with a smile on his face as he congratulated his mother who purred in joy at her son's praise.

As the cheering calmed down, another voice echoed in a solemn tone " Dovestar !" All cats turned their heads to see Hawkfeather stepping forward. He was looking at Dovestar particularly "I ask you the permission to talk..." he begged in a old but firm tone. The pale gray Leader was surprised by nodded regardless. Hawkfeather sighed deeply as if he was about to say something hurtful before looking up at everyone "Cats of Skyclan , I am becoming old and weak so I decided to join the Elders... I step down as Deputy !"

The whole Clan listened in a stunned silence. Fireheart sighed sadly : Hawkfeather was no longer a young tom and it was a matter of time before he would become an Elder so it wasn't a big surprise. The large gray tabby tom was older than Whitestorm , the respectable senior Warrior of Thunderclan and at this age, many would have joined the Elders already.

Dovestar looked at her Deputy with sadness but understood as she

pronounced those words "Are you sure of your decision ?" Hawkfeaher nodded solemnly "In that case.... Your request is accepted Hawkfeather... I think you for all those moons of loyalty to me and Skyclan and I hope Starclan will grant you a good end of life !"

The Skyclan Cats cheered their Deputy as the large gray tabby tom approached the Elders who welcomed him warmly. " Its time to appoint a new Deputy... I will announce my decision at sunset !" Everyone nodded and went back cheering for the New Warriors and Apprentices. Normally a Leader must chose his/her new Deputy before moonhight and Fireheart was curious about who will be chosen .

" *As long as its not Darkcloud or Foxclaw , it would be fine..."* The bright-flame colored thought to himself as he saw Kestrelfeather approaching the Leader with a strange look on her face. She looked just like she had seen a ghost. Dovestar's face turned from confusion to seriousness as she and the Medicine Cat walked away from the crowd.

Fireheart was curious about their behavior but he was interrupted by Goldenkit's voice " Why can't I be apprentice now ?" she was whining to her mother who responded calmly "Because you don't have 6 moons yet~"

"But I want to be apprentice now !" the she-kit complained "Us too !" the other kits chorused in agreement which caused Fireheart's whiskers to twitch in amusement.

Graystripe then approached him " I wonder who will be the new Deputy... If I have the choice, I would take you..." Fireheart looked at him with a frown "No Dovestar would NEVER chose me ! There are more qualified Warriors than me for the job !" the fiery pelted tom responded with a shrug. "You would make a good Deputy you know~" Creampelt said as she approached her mate with a warm smile.

"No thanks ! I'm satisfied with my position !" he responded to her and Weaselpelt approached "You don't want to be Deputy ? Everyone would want to be !" she remarked with confusion " Then

I'm not like everyone..." Fireheart responded nonchalantly. His friends looked at each other before Graystripe sighed "You were always so selfless even back when we were apprentices !"

" Some things cannot change old friend~" The fiery furred tom responded with a grin which caused his longtime friend to snort in amusement. Then the two staid silent as they waited for Dovestar's decision.

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The sun was slowly disappearing in the horizon when Dovestar re-appeared from her den along with Kestrelfeather who arbored a stern look on her face. The pale gray Leader jumped on the Rock-pile before saying in a loud tone ***"Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey join here beneath the Rock-pile for a Clan meeting !"***

At her call everyone approached the rock-like structure , eager to see who will be their new Deputy. Among the crowd were the newly made Warriors Cloudtail , Brightheart and Croweye who were starting their vigil after Dovestar's decision.

When everyone was present, Dovestar eyed her Medicine Cat for a moment before looking up at the stars then back to her Clan. ***" The time has come to chose a new Deputy... I said those words before Starclan and I hope our ancestors may hear and approve of my choice...."***

All Cats were becoming more and more excited , ready to cheer the Chosen one. Fireheart and Graystripe were among them as the two were sitting at each other side. They both looked up at the Skyclan Leader, their Leader, with a calm look on their face. Creampelt was standing near them , eager to know who will replace Hawkfeather as the new Deputy of Skyclan.

Dovestar staid silent for a moment before opening her mouth and saying something no one was expecting. ***" The new Deputy of Skyclan will be... FIREHEART !"***

(To be continued...)

Chapter 11 : New Deputy and Shocking News

" ***The new Deputy of Skyclan will be... FIREHEART !"***

After Dovestar pronounced those words, the entire Clan froze in shock and surprise. None of them had expected this. But the most surprise cat noticeable was without contest our beloved flame pelted tom whose green eyes were opened wide as he looked up at the gray furred Leader. " Dovestar ! It must be an error ! I cannot be Skyclan Deputy !" Fireheart inquired loudly after a moment of complete silence.

" Yes ! There are FAR better QUALIFIED Warriors that this Thunderclan Filth !" Darkcloud shouted haughtily as he gazed the fiery pelted with a clear expression of disdain. But soon the gray tom flinched in fear when Graystripe hissed at him menacingly along with Creampelt, Brownleaf , Russetpelt , Weasepelt and Cloudtail.

Fireheart was glad that his friends and mothers were supporting him but then he noticed something...unusual. Darkcloud's ally, Foxclaw, didn't say anything and instead of being disgusted by the news, he seemed calm and posed. But his thought were interrupted by Nightfur's voice as the Senior Warrior stepped forward "Darkcloud ! Even if you don't approve of our Leader's decision , You HAVE to at least RESPECT IT !" "By The Warrior Code, a Leader's word is LAW !" Snowpelt, the second Senior Warrior, added in agreement.

Darkcloud huffed in indignation before looking away in an attempt to ignore them all. While his defenders were still glaring at the gray tom with amber eyes, Fireheart was still looking at Dovestar and was about to repeat his words when she stopped him by lifting her tail " Fireheart ! Do you accept the position of Deputy of our Clan ?" she asked him with a calm but stern tone.

The flame pelted tom seemed conflicted : he NEVER dreamed to being Deputy of a Clan even when he still lived in Thunderclan and he never thought a Leader would chose HIM of all Cats.

But , on the other hand, becoming a Deputy was a honor... The biggest mark of trust a Leader would show toward one of its Warriors.

He then looked at his comrades who all looked back at him expectantly. His mothers, Brownleaf and Russetpelt, were watching with a proud smile while Creampelt and Graystripe were looking at him with joy. Then he saw Goldenkit , Creampelt's daughter , and the expression in her eyes warmed his heart : she looked overjoyed.

It was at this moment that he knew he couldn't back down... He couldn't refused the post or he would disappoint many cats. "Fireheart ?" Dovestar asked him from her place in a hurried tone., waiting for his answer. The flame pelted tom took a deep breath before looking up at the Skyclan Leader with a neutral look on his face "I accept..."

At those words, all Cats congratulated him as they cheered for him . The first ones to congratulate him were Graystripe and Creampelt who had her large body pressed against her mate as she purred loudly in happiness. Soon , Fireheart found himself cuddled by both his mothers who licked his face repeatedly. Cloudtail and Brightheart along with Croweye congratulated him happily after.

He was wondering why his Clan-mates were so happy to see him as their Deputy as he was once member of Thunderclan, one of the Four Clans who chased them out of the Forest Territories but then he remembered that he had Skyclan Blood in his veins.

The only one who didn't seemed happy about Fireheart's nomination was ,of course, Darkcloud who left the gorge to enter the Warrior Den , completely ignoring his new Deputy. Then she flame colored tom saw Foxclaw looking at him. He waited for a sharp insult or barred teeth of displeasure but the dark ginger Skyclan tom stood there calmly. Fireheart was completely shocked by the tom's behavior and became more surprised when Foxclaw bowed his head respectfully at him.

Still unsure, the fiery pelted tom nodded his head at him before a voice caught his attention "YEEEEAH ! DADDY IS THE NEW DEPUTY !" Goldenkit's squeal of happiness caused everyone and even Dovestar to laugh in amusement. Stormkit and Featherkit, Graystripe's kits, seemed equally happy for their father's friend as they cheered for him.

Speaking of Graystripe, he had just punched his friend's shoulder in a friendly manner "Congratulations ! I knew Dovestar would chose you !" Fireheart gave him with an appreciative smile to hide what he was thinking : he was wondering why the gray Leader chose him instead of one of her Warriors.

Soon the cheering stopped and everyone made their ways toward their nests to enjoy and restful night. In the corner of his eyes, he saw Kestrelfeather, the Clan's Medicine Cat, who seemed happy by her Leader's choice before looking at Fireheart with a soft but serious look which caused his fur to bristle in surprise. Then he remembered something : Ealier , Dovestar had a talk with the brown medicine cat .... And it seemed serious.

What if Kestrelfeather was partially responsible for his nomination ? He glanced at her questioningly and in response, she sent him a look which seemed to mean *" We need to talk".* He nodded secretly at her and she walked toward their Leader. "Fireheart are you okay ?" Graystripe's question took him off guard and he turned his head to see his friend looking at him with concern "Yes Ye I'm fine... I was just thinking..."

The dark gray tom nodded in acceptance before the fiery pelted tom saw his mate approaching them. "Well I think I should leave you two alone then... " Graystripe said with a smirk before trotting away. Fireheart ignored as he pressed his head against Creampelt's , purring welcomingly. "I can't believe this ! My mate is Deputy of Skyclan !" the large cream furred molly said in astonishment.

"I can't believe it either... but why me ?" the fiery pelted tom inquired as he looked at the sky. Creampelt , seeing her mate's unsureness, pressed her large body against his before licking the top of his head soothingly. Fireheart quickly became more relaxed and he mewled in gratitude which earned a warm purr from the cream

furred molly.

Sadly the moment was kinda broken by Weaselpelt who approached them " Fireheart ! Our Leader want to see you..."

The two lovebirds looked at each other before looking back at the brown and white molly "Why ?" In response, she shrugged " I don't know..."

Fireheart sighed and looked at his mate with a concerned look "Everything will be fine Fireheart~" Creampelt purred as she licked his nose lovingly. Those words warmed his heart and he mewled softy a 'thank you' before walking toward his Leader while Creampelt leaded Goldenkit , Featherkit and Stormkit to the nursery.

As he approached the gray furred Leader, Fireheart noticed that Kestrelfeather was there as well as the two mollies were conversing with each other. But soon they stopped talking when they saw the fire pelted tom coming. " Fireheart... We need to talk ... Its urgent..." The flame colored tom was becoming to feel nervous as those words came out of Dovestar's mouth. Then the gray molly nodded to the Medicine cat who lead them toward a place called the Whispering Cave.

During the first day they passed here, the former Thunderclanners got to visit their next territory and Weaselpelt had showed them this part part of the gorge explaining " the Whispering Cave is where out medicine Cat share tongues with our Warrior ancestors"

As the trio entered the cave, the phosphorescent mosses on the walls brightened when the Moonlight entered the cave.

Kestrelfeather then sat down before facing her Leader and new-made Deputy who were following her example by sitting down. The Medicine Cat and Leader shared a look before looking at the young bright-flame colored tom who grew really nervous at the moment.

"Fireheart... You must be wondering I chose you as my Deputy despise your young age..." Dovestar said after an uncomfortable moment of silence. Fireheart sighed deeply as he responded "Yes

Dovestar..." The gray molly looked at him for a moment before turning her head toward Kestrelfeather and nodding her head.

The Medicine Cat nodded back before looking at Fireheart " I had received a vision for Starclan just before the Deputy Ceremony..." she began to say in a hesitant tone. The bright-flame pelted tom became curious as those words entered his ears but he staid silent. " I was in a clearing ...alone... I asked if there were any cats around... but nothing happened... But then a voice echoed from all around me..."

Fireheart wanted to ask what the voice said to her but he thought it was better to stay silent. As if Starclan had whispered to her his silent question, the pale brown molly added " It said ***'A great danger is rising... Fire alone can saves the Clans...'*** Then the voice stopped as I was suddenly surrounded by a raging fire... And through it... I saw eyes... green eyes shining in the flames' light..."

Then she paused as she took deep breath. Fireheart, for his part, was shocked : those words echoed what Spottedleaf , the pretty tortoiseshell molly and former Medicine Cat of Thunderclan told him back when he was an apprentice. ' Fire alone can save our Clan' was the exact words.

When Kestrelfeather spoke again it was no longer in a hesitant tone but in a serious one " After that the vision stopped but when I came back from my sense , I saw a cat beside me... it was a tortoiseshell molly which fur was covered with stars !" At this description, Fireheart couldn't hold himself as he asked "This she-cat... was her name Spottedleaf by any chance ?"

This caused the Medicine Cat to looked at him with shock before mumbling "Yes... Yes that was her name...Do you know her ? " "When I was an apprentice, Spottedleaf was our medicine Cat and one of my first friends... She was killed by Clawface, a Shadowclan Warrior..." At the memory of the she-cat's death, Fireheart became sad. Seeing this, Dovestar coiled her tail around his shoulder in a comforting manner " I'm sorry..."

Fireheart looked at his Leader in gratitude before looking back at Kestrelfeather who seemed a bit sad by the death of a fellow

Medicine cat. "Did she say something in particular ?" The pale brown molly shook her head " No... she just stood there with a smile... I don't know why but... when I was near her, I felt same... I can't explain it..."

The bright-flame colored tom nodded as he understood the feeling. "When Kestrelfeather told me her vision... I knew what I have to do ..." Dovestar said seriously as he gazed at her Deputy. " So I was chosen because of a vision..." Fireheart muttered to himself but sadly the other two heard him "Its not the only reason ! During the first day you passed in my Clan, I observed you... Unlike many cats , You always do what you feel is right... Regardless of what your Clan-mates think about your actions..." The gray Leader explained sternly but still in a soft tone.

When she finished talking , Fireheart was still processing her words. Despise being selfness by nature, he had to admit she was right. "But you don't even know me..." He whispered softy but the Medicine cat heard him and said " I know you better than you think..." The flame pelted tom glanced at her with a raise-brow "How come ?"

" Fireheart... Russetpelt is my sister... You and I are kin ! " At those words, Fireheart became speechless as his green eyes were locked on her "I am surprised myself that my beloved sister didn't tell you anything about me... " She mumbled softy as she looked at her nephew " But she always got mouse-brained when she is with Brownleaf... So I can't be totally mad at her..."

Dovestar snorted in amusement before looking at the flame pelted tom " Fireheart... I can understand if all of this shock you... I would be if I was in your place really... but I trust to keep being yourself despise what you learn and being the Deputy Skyclan need at the moment !"

Fireheart looked back and forth between the two for a moment before saying in a determined tone "I will try my best Dovestar.... I won't disappoint you..." "I know you won't... oh and don't say a word about this to any other cats ,understood ?" she said the last part with authority and with a sharp look on her face.

"I promise Dovestar..." Fireheart quickly responded and the gray Leader padded away leaving the two behind. "You look exhausted Fireheart... You should go to your nest and rest~" Kestrelfeather inquired to her nephew who nodded at her gently before making his way toward the exit "Oh and Fireheart ?" the pale brown molly 's call for him stopped the fiery pelted tom dead in his track as he turned his head to look at her questioningly.

"When you and I are alone... You can call me 'Auntie'~" Kestrelfeather inquired in a soft tone and warm smile as her blue eyes gazed at him " Alright...Good night... Auntie..." he mumbled at her respectfully and as he padded away, he could hear her purr of delight.

As he made his way toward the Warrior Den, he was thinking about the vision his Aunt's received from Spottedleaf and was wondering what was the rising 'Great Danger'. A feeling of determination surrounded him as he promised to himself to not let anything happen to his new Clan as long as he lived.

(To continued...)

Chapter 12 : Excellent News

Two moons had passed since Fireheart became Skyclan's New Deputy and many things changed during this time. First of all, Foxclaw , the dark ginger Warrior who taunted him and his group for being 'Thunderclan Filth', became more friendly and even hang out with them from time to time. It was needless to say that everyone was surprised by this change of behavior but of course, they were all happy for it... all except Darkcloud of course but no one paid attention to him.

Secondly, Snowpelt, one of the two Senior Warriors of the Clan, decided to join the Elders as she admitted she was feeling her age. Dovestar, the Clan Leader was saddened about this but she understood as she wished for her loyal Warrior a good end of life among the other Elders. Nightfur was asked if he wanted to follow his comrade but he responded 'no' saying he was still strong enough to serve as Warrior.

Thirdly, Cloudtail and Brightheart officially became a couple and everyone congratulated them. Fireheart and Graystripe had shared an amused glance as they KNEW it would happen. After even back when they were apprentice, these two seemed quite close. Croweye was really happy for his friends and a few days after the two, the black tom announced to everyone he and Mistfur had become mates much to everyone's surprise. Regardless the whole congratulated them especially their mentors , Weasepelt and Snowpelt respectively.

Fourthly, Sootkit , Whitekit and Foxkit became apprentices and were given Darkcloud , Russetpelt and Graystripe respectively. Even if everyone was happy for the trio, Fireheart was a bit wary about Sootkit because he got DARKCLOUD as his mentor. He knew the tom disliked him and the other former Thunderclanners and would surely incite his apprentice to do the same. Fireheart ,since then, promised to keep an eye for the young apprentice so he wouldn't

became like the gray tom.

As if it wasn't enough good news, Spotpaw (Nightfur's apprentice) got her Warrior Name and was now known as Spotfur. Everyone had congratulated her and she was glad to join her Old Den-mates in the Warrior Den. However she surprised everyone when she asked to become Kestrelfeather's apprentice. When asked why, the tortoiseshell molly responded that she was always interested in herbs but wanted to learn how to fight and hunt before. The whole Clan agreed with her decision and Kestrelfeather happily accepted her as her apprentice.

But sadly ,there weren't only good news during those two moons. Dovestar lost a life because from greencough and Fireheart learnt from his aunt ,Kestrelfeather the Clan Medicine Cat, that his Leader had only one last life left. Speaking of the two, they became really close and Russetpelt and Brownleaf, his mothers, apologized for not telling him about his aunt sooner, claiming they forgotten which caused Kestrelfeather to complain about 'being the forgotten one' but she received a hug from her entire family (which was really cute by the way)

Back to Dovestar, the pale gray furred Leader was becoming weaker and everyone knew she wouldn't last long. But despise her state, Dovestar still acted the same as if nothing happened or as if she was still a young cat. From what the former Thunderclanners know, Dovestar was the Oldest Cat in the Clan ! (16 years old to be precise) At this age, it was surprising she still looked strong and confident or the fact she didn't stepped down as Leader to join the Elders but no one questioned her for that because everyone knew why. Dovestar was loyal to her Clan and wouldn't NEVER join the Elders even she was becoming more and more frail and weak.

Despise this , Skyclan was fine thanks to the combined efforts of their Leader and their Deputy. Even if he was young, Fireheart proved to everyone he was qualified to the job but deep down he doubted it. When Dovestar caught greencough, the flame pelted tom took over for a while until she was strong enough. The fiery pelted tom was quite uneasy the day after the Ceremony but since then, he became more confident and everyone could tell he would make a good leader one day.

Russetpelt and Brownleaf were really proud of him and even helped him if he needed some help from time to time. Graystripe ,for his part, was always seen with his kits, Stormkit and Featherkit who will soon be old enough to became apprentice. Goldenkit , Creampelt's daughter, was also ready to become an apprentice and Fireheart knew she would be an handful for whoever became her mentor.

Since the Deputyship ceremony, Goldenkit was always looking at her father's figure with nothing but pure adoration as she seemed really proud to be the Deputy's daughter. She wasn't the only one though.... Her mother Creampelt was just as proud for her mate as her daughter. The large cream furred molly had began to return to her duty a moon after her mate became the Clan New Deputy but she had Russetpelt , Brownleaf , Weaselpelt or Brightheart to watch the kits.

Anyway a new day was beginning as the sun rose in the sky. Fireheart was slowly making his way toward the pile of fresh-kill, his ginger fur blazing like a raging fire under the sunlight. He had just saluted the morning patrol (Addereye, Mistfur , Weaselpelt and Foxclaw) and Fireheart was about to pick up something to eat from the fresh-kill pile. Sadly ,the moment he lowered his head down to take a plum rabbit, he was interrupted by the familiar voice of a certain pale yellow she-kit "DADDY !"

With a playful roll of his eyes, Fireheart turned his head to his adoptive daughter, Goldenkit, running toward him at full speed. She was followed by Stormkit , Featherkit and Creampelt. But then he became surprised that Dovestar was with them. "Daddy ! I will become an apprentice ! Now !" Goldenkit revealed to him with happiness and joy.

The fiery pelted tom's eyes widened in surprise but also with joy as his green eyes gazed down at the she-kit "Us too !" the two grey siblings added just as joyously. Fireheart blinked out in surprise for a moment before he chuckled to himself : he almost (almost being the keyword) forgot that Goldenkit, Featherkit and Stormkit were almost 6 moons old now.

The flame colored tom purred in happiness as the trio kits bounced

around him joyously. Then he looked at his Leader for confirmation and the pale gray she-cat nodded in agreement at Goldenkit's announcement . Dovestar was about to leave when she suddenly stopped before she looked back at her Deputy with her familiar soft smile "Oh and Fireheart ? One of those three will become your apprentice..."

The bright ginger tom looked at his Leader with wide eyes and he asked "Really ?! Which one ?!" he asked the gray molly with excitement. He hoped he would get Goldenkit as her apprentice but of course , the Warrior Code stated that a new-made apprentice shouldn't have one of its parents as mentor in case she/he would be going soft on the apprentice.

"Do you really think I would tell you ?" Dovestar asked with a mischievous grin which earned an groan from her Deputy who looked back at her with dissatisfaction clear on his face as he watched his Leader walking away. "You know Fireheart... You are way cuter when you re upset~" Creampelt cooed with affection as she licked the top of his head lovingly. The fiery tom glanced at her with a glare which caused her smirk to widen a bit.

"I hope Daddy will be my mentor !" Goldenkit shouted loudly as she pressed her tiny body against her father's forepaws. " No I will be his apprentice !" Featherkit inquired as she approached "No me !" her brother objected and the three went into an argument to decide who will be Fireheart's apprentice.

The two adults seemed amused and then looked at each other "They grew up so fast..." the large cream furred molly remarked with a sad sigh "Yes and we can't do anything against it..." Fireheart added with a sigh of his own. Creampelt nodded in agreement before suddenly asking "Do you miss the Forest ?"

The flame pelted tom was caught off guard by this question but soon regained his composure as he responded calmly "I do sometimes... but I'm happier here that I would be in Thunderclan... In the forest, I was considered as a bad-warrior because I was a 'kittypet'... Even if some Cats DO respected me , all the Clans never did because I was not Clan-Born..."

Creampelt staid silent but pressed her large body against her mate's smaller one in an attempt to comfort him. The fire colored tom purred in gratefulness as he nuzzled her chin which earned a loud purr of content from the large molly.

But then they were interrupted by Dovestar's call ***" Let all cats old enough to catch their own prey join here beneath the Rock-Pile for a Clan Meeting !"*** The two looked at each other fondly before joining their comrades who were approaching their Leaders, wondering what was about to happen. Fireheart sat near his longtime friend, Graystripe, who mewled a welcome as he didn't had the chance to do it earlier in the morning because he went out to train his apprentice Foxpaw (PS : He DID complained to his friend that he won't have one of his kits as apprentice)

Weaselpelt approached the duo and greeted them gently like she always did and she was soon followed by Lynxclaw, Foxclaw , Snowpelt and Nightfur. After them came Cloudtail and Brightheart , who had their tails curled around each other, along with Croweye and Mistfur. When the full clan were present, Dovestar looked at everyone calmly before saying in a solemn tone

"Everyone ! I called this meeting to make apprentices of three of our kits ! They are old enough to leave the nursery and are now ready to train to later become Warriors of Our Noble Clan !" Then she paused as the gray furred molly looked at the soon-to-be apprentices sitting near Creampelt and Fireheart who an excited look on their faces.

" ***Goldenkit , you have reached the age of six moons, and it is time for you to be apprenticed. From this day on, until you receive your warrior name, you will be known as Goldenpaw. Your mentor will be Weaselpelt ! I hope she will pass down all she knows on to you !"***

At those words, the brown and white molly approached her apprentice who looked a bit sad about something but still manage to hide it to not upset her new mentor. Fireheart was a bit disappointed himself but he knew Weaselpelt was a good mentor so he knew his adoptive daughter was in good paws.

" ***Weasepelt you are ready to take on an apprentice... You had received excellent training from Snowpelt, and you have shown yourself to be loyal and fast ... You will be the mentor of Goldenpaw , and I expect you to pass on all you know to this apprentice !"***

Weaselpelt touched nose with her apprentice before the two walking away. Goldenpaw secretly glanced at her adoptive father with a sad look but the fire pelted tom gave her a reassuring smile and she seemed to brighten a bit at this. Dovestar then looked at Featherkit who seemed a bit shy at the moment even if the excitement was clearly written on her face.

"***Featherkit ! You have reached the age of six moons, and it is time for you to be apprenticed. From this day on, until you receive your warrior name, you will be known as Featherpaw ! Your mentor will be Fireheart and I hope he will pass down all he knows on to you !"***

The flame colored tom stepped closer to his apprentice and saw the joy radiating from her blue eyes as she looked up at him. ***" Fireheart ! You are ready to take on an apprentice...You had received excellent training from Bluestar of Thunderclan, and you have shown yourself to be loyal and brave... You will be the mentor of Featherpaw, and I expect you to pass on all you know to this apprentice !"***

The Skyclan Deputy nodded his head to his Leader before he and his apprentice touched nose to each other. Then the two approached Weaselpelt and Goldenpaw. The latter looked at her friend with envy as she seemed a bit jealous to have her father as her mentor "I own you a mouse then Featherpaw..." she grumbled in disappointment while Featherpaw only grinned in triumph "Why do you own her a mouse ?" Weaselpelt asked her mentor with a curious raise-brow "We made a bet on you would be Daddy's apprentice... The winner got to have a mouse from the losers..." Goldenpaw explained with a frown.

Fireheart blinked in surprise as he didn't expected this " I don't know if I should be embarrassed or honored..." he mumbled to himself but Weaselpelt said with fake jealousy "At least they made a

bet to see who will be YOUR apprentice mouse-brain !" The other two snickered when Fireheart grumbled in annoyance.

Dovestar had paused to look at them and grinned : she had heard about the conversation and was quite amused by this. But then she shook her head to look back at the last kit ***" Stormkit ! You have reached the age of six moons, and it is time for you to be apprenticed... From this day on, until you receive your warrior name, you will be known as Stormpaw ! Your mentor will be Foxclaw ! I hope he will pass down all he knows on to you !"***

Fireheart watched as the dark ginger tom approached the grey apprentice with a calm look on his face. Then the fire pelted tom glanced at Graystripe who seemed happy for his son. If this ceremony had took place a few moons ago, then he and Graystripe would have been horrified to have Foxclaw as mentor but now they were fine with it. The dark ginger tom became a friend to the former Thunderclan Warriors and so they didn't have any more bad feelings about him.

"***Foxclaw ! You are ready to take on an apprentice... You had received excellent training from Hawkfeather, and you have shown yourself to be brave and strong... You will be the mentor of Stormpaw , and I expect you to pass on all you know to this apprentice !"***

The dark ginger tom solemnly nodded before he and his apprentice touched nose to each other. Then the two walked toward the other new-made mentors/apprentices before the Clan started cheering for them " GOLDENPAW ! FEATHERPAW ! STORMPAW ! GOLDENPAW ! FEATHERPAW ! STORMPAW !"

Graystripe congratulated his kits before looking back at his long time friend with joy. Fireheart was glad his friend approved him to mentor one of his kits and he looked at his apprentice who was looking at everyone cheering her name along with her friend and brother.

"Congratulations love !" Creampelt said to her mate as she licked his face with affection. Fireheart putted in response before someone cleared its throat : a molly by the sound. Everyone looked over at

Lynxclaw who was sitting near Ambershine and Brightheart " We will live in the Nursery for now on... We are expecting kits !"

Fireheart looked at Brightheart who nodded her head to everyone as she gazed at Cloudtail with pure love in her eyes. The whole Clan congratulated them but then Creampelt stepped forward "I will join you soon as well..." The flame pelted tom blinked in surprise before he gazed at her "Why that Goldenpaw is an apprentice now ?" then a flash of realization crossed his mind as his green emerald eyes widened "No...Don't tell me..."

The large cream furred molly laughed before responding with glee "Yes Fireheart ! I'm pregnant with YOUR kits !~" Fireheart became silent as he gaped in surprise at the news "YEEEEEESSSS! I'M GONNA HAVE SIBLINGS !" Goldenpaw's shouts of joy caused everyone to laugh at the newmade apprentice.

Thanks to the shout, Fireheart regained his composure as he looked at his mate with love "I'm gonna be a father..." "Yes Fireheart~" Creampelt said as she purred in affection while licking her mate's head. Russetpelt and Brownleaf approached their son before congratulating him warmly by licking his face and fur repeatedly.

Dovestar watched the exchange from the Rock-Pile with a warm smile on her face. Then she jumped off the rock before walking back to her mate leaving the Clan cheering for the soon-to-be-Queens and the promise of future Warriors for the Clan.

(To be continued...)

Chapter 13 : Dovestar's Death

The peaceful silence of the afternoon was broken by the voice of a familiar flame pelted tom . "Now Featherpaw... Attack me !" Fireheart ordered his apprentice as he stood before her in fighting position. The silver apprentice eyed him with her beautiful blue eyes , looking for the perfect moment to strike before pouncing on her mentor , claws unsheathed. Sadly, the fiery pelted tom saw it coming and dodged her attacked before head-butting her side which sent the young apprentice flying away into the dirt.

" You must be quicker ! Your eyes betrayed you ! Your enemy shouldn't have the time to think !" Fireheart explained to her in a calm tone as his green eyes watched her getting up. A few weeks passed since the Apprentice ceremony and Featherpaw , along with her brother Stormpaw and her friend (his adoptive daughter) Goldenpaw , were becoming good hunters and fighters.

Sometimes, he trained his adoptive daughter when her own mentor , Weaselpelt, was unable to and Goldenpaw was always eager to be with her father figure. Graystripe , despise his kits being apprentices, was still overprotective of them. Thankfully he trusted Fireheart enough to let his old friend train Featherpaw.

Stormpaw , for his part, found a good mentor in Foxclaw , the dark ginger tom that used to dislike the former Thunderclanners but who became a good comrade since. Even if the dark gray tom trusted him with his son, Graystripe made sure to always keep his eyes on the gray apprentice.

As the time passed, Fireheart had noticed something amusing : Stormpaw passed many times with Nightpaw , Addereye's apprentice and the two of them acted the same way that Brightheart and Cloudtail back when the two were apprentices. With a grin, the fire pelted tom wondered if Graystripe had noticed his son's behavior with the black she-apprentice.

His own apprentice , Featherpaw, seemed to act the same with Whitepaw , Russetpelt's apprentice. The flame colored Deputy got to know Whitepaw since she was still a tiny kit in the nursery and if the two of them become mates in the future... he wouldn't mind. Again, Fireheart wondered if his longtime friend noticed his kits' behavior and if not then he must be as blind as a mole.

However, he was not really sure about the relationship between his daughter and Sootpaw (Darckloud's apprentice). After all Darcloud hated his guts along with the other former Thunderclan Cats and he was still wondering if the gray tom was training his apprentice to hate them. For now, Sootpaw acted like any apprentice and didn't seemed to mind hanging around him or his other comrades but like any good father, he didn't want a tom to 'steal' his beloved daughter , adoptive or not.

Apart of the apprentices, some things changed in Skyclan : Creampelt , along with Brightheart , Lynxclaw and Ambershine were currently in the nursery. Everyone could see their bellies becoming bigger and bigger as the time passed. In a few weeks, the four of them would give birth to future members of the Clan.

After his mate told him she was expecting HIS kits, he made sure to always had time to check on her and to make sure she had everything she needed like a piece of prey, a new nest , water... Creampelt purred every time she saw how good he treated her and Fireheart wasn't the only one acting like this. Cloudtail, Fireheart's former apprentice and Brightheart's mate, was just like his former mentor : loving, caring...

Lynxclaw and Ambershine always told their Den-mates how lucky they were. Lynxclaw's mate, Addereye , was not always there for her and the same could be say for Ambershine's own mate , Foxclaw. The dark ginger , however, tried his best to come as much as he could but he was busy with his duties and the training-sessions with his apprentice.

Russetpelt and Brownleaf , Fireheart's mothers, were really excited at the idea of having (and spoiling) great-kits. But deep down they were a bit nostalgic... They missed the time where poor Fireheart was a small helpless kitten... Now he was a full grown Warrior

ready to start a family on his own... Thankfully, their son reassured them by saying he would always need them which ended in a family group hug.

Back to Fireheart and Featherpaw. The fiery pelted Deputy took his apprentice for a training session and , to his relief, Featherpaw was doing well but she needed to be quicker. The silver apprentice got up before suddenly pouncing on her mentor who was caught off guard by her sudden attack . He found himself pinned down by the apprentice whose paws were pressed against his face and neck "Like this ?" she asked him innocently but with some glee.

"Yes like this ! Good job Featherpaw !" The Skyclan Deputy said with a proud smile and the silver apprentice purred in delight for the praise she received from her mentor. Fireheart's whiskers twitched with amusement as his green eyes gazed at his apprentice. Featherpaw was just like her dead mother, Silverstream : strong, loyal, cunning... Surely, she will become as good as Crookedstar's daughter was back when she was still alive.

"That's enough for today ! Let's go back to camp !" The fiery pelted Deputy ordered his apprentice who nodded eagerly as she followed him , bouncing around like a little kit (much to his amusement). As the two approached the gorge, they were shocked to find the entire Clan gathered around....something he couldn't distinct because of the mass of furs around it.

Mentor and apprentice shared a concerned glance before hurriedly climbing down the rocky-wall to join their comrades who were so focused on whatever they were looking at that they didn't saw them coming. But as the two approached, Graystripe turned his head to face them "Fireheart ! There you are !" "What's going on here Graystripe ? Is someone hurt ?!" the Deputy asked his longtime friend with wide eyes of concern.

Featherpaw looked at her father with fear and Fireheart knew she was thinking about her brother, Goldenpaw or her-might-be-lover, Whitepaw. "Its Dovestar ! She was talking with Hawkfeather when she suddenly started to cough... Not soft coughs but loud and deep one as if she had problems to breath... Hawkfeather and the rest of the Elders carried her to our Medicine Cat to help her... " Graystripe

explained in a sad and concerned tone as his yellow eyes were locked into the green ones of his longtime friend.

Fireheart went deep in thought as his mind processed what she was hearing... Dovestar was on her last life and if whatever she had kill her.... Skyclan would lost a wonderful Leader. But his thought were interrupted by Creampelt who stepped away from the crowd to approach them "Fireheart ! Did you hear about our Leader ?!" "Yes and what aren't you in your nest ? You need to rest !" Fireheart inquired in a gentle tone despise the situation.

Despise being worried for his Leader, he had to make sure his mate was healthy so their unborn kits would be fine. "Thank you for being concerned for me but how can I stay on my nest when our Leader might die ?!" she asked him sternly but yet in a soft tone. "I'm sure Dovestar will be fine ! Kestrelfeather is an excellent Medicine Cat ! She will heal our Leader in no time !" The fiery pelted Deputy said in a confident tone to reassure his worried mate.

"I hope so... " The large cream furred molly whispered softy when something or rather someone caught everyone's attention. Kestrelfeather stepped out of her den to face the crowd ***"How is Dovestar ?" "Is she alright ?" " What happened to her ?"***

Strangely, the pale brown molly ignored the questions as her blue eyes scanned the waves of fur before her as if she was looking for someone in particular.

Then her deep blue eyes landed right on Fireheart's flame pelt and then spoke in a stern tone "Fireheart ! Our Leader want to see you !" All eyes landed on the Deputy who was feeling a bit intimidated at the moment. But then he took a deep breath before making his way through the crowd to approach Kestrelfeather who lead him into her den. But before entering, the fire pelted tom looked behind with a worried expression on his face.

Creampelt , Russetpelt, Brownleaf and Graystripe looked at him with a reassuring smile while Featherpaw (who was sitting near Whitepaw (not a surprise really)) was looking at him with a scared look on her face along with Stormpaw and Goldenpaw , his own daughter.

"Fireheart !" Kestrelfeather's voice called him out from the inside of the cave and the fiery pelted Deputy stepped inside after looking at his family and friends one last time. The pale brown Medicine Cat lead him toward a nest where their Leader was resting on. As he approached her, the flame pelted Deputy saw her state and was now really worried : her breath was becoming shallower and shallower as the time passed and to make things worse, she seemed to have not enough strength to even fully open her eyes.

He stopped before her and gently lowered his head to ask in a calm tone "Dovestar... are you alright ?" He wanted to punch himself on the face to ask something so stupid but he couldn't resist. "My time has come... I can feel it... I wish I had more time with my Clan but... I know I leave it in good paws..." the gray furred Leader spoke in a weak tone , breathing loudly. At those words, Fireheart began to panic "No ! Don't say that ! The Clan needs you !"

Dovestar coughed when he finished talking and she weakly lifted her head to look at him "As I said...My time has come... After my death... Skyclan will need you more than ever... Lead them Fireheart..." "But... I'm not wise or strong enough to lead Skyclan... I'm not like either you or Bluestar... I'm no Leader..." The flame pelted tom objected softy only to have the back of his head cuffed by Kestrelfeather "OW ! Jeez ! What was that for ?!" he asked his aunt who looked back at him with a stern glare.

"That for telling stupidities dear nephew !" the pale brown molly hissed angrily as her deep blue eyes were locked on his green emerald ones. Dovestar purred weakly in amusement at the two antics "Thank you Kestrelfeather... I would have done it myself if I had enough strength... Anyway... You're wrong Fireheart..." the gray Leader looked at her Deputy with a serious look on her face despise her state.

"You are young yes but you had all the qualities a Leader have : you are patient, calm, posed, strong, loyal and brave... And you are not alone... Your comrades will help you... Starclan will help you..." Dovestar said in a weak tone before looking up at the ceiling with a peaceful look on her face " I'm ready to hear Starclan's judgment..."

"No don't go..." Fireheart pleaded her in a saddened tone. He

already lost a friend and a Leader in the past... He didn't want to lose another one ! "I have too Fireheart... Take care of your Clan-mates : from the old members to the youngest... May Starclan grant you a good life Fireheart... the fire of Skyclan...Kestrelfeather ? Don't hesitate to punch him if he do some mistakes.." The last part was said with a hint on amusement. "I promise I will Dovestar" the Medicine Cat said with a grin despise her sadness as she glanced at her nephew.

Fireheart groaned in annoyance for this but then he looked back at his dying Leader before saying in a respectful tone "And you... May you found peace in Starclan... Your Clan will remember you... Dovestar..." The gray Leader purred gently before closing her eyes as she breathed for the last time. Fireheart lowered his head down in sorrow as he pressed his nose against her side. Kestrelfeather pressed her body against her nephew as tears were falling from her eyes.

Dovestar... the Great Leader of Skyclan was no more. She was hunting among the Cats of Starclan now. "The Clan needs to know..." Kestrelfeather inquired sadly as she gazed at the dead body of her Leader. "I know... You should tell them... I will carry her..."

The pale brown molly nodded and licked his face gently before walking away to announce the rest of the Clan the bad news. Fireheart staid behind , looking at the dead corpse with sadness as he whispered "Thank you for allowing us to stay..." He then hear the wail of sorrow coming from outside and gently he picked up the body with its scruff before carrying it toward the exit.

When he appeared with Dovestar's body between his jaws, the Clan looked at the dead Leader with pure sadness , sorrow and pain. After gently, deposing the corpse down, he looked at everyone with the same look of pain that they had. Kestrelfeather then ordered everyone to paid their respect to their diseased Leader and one by one , all members of Skyclan shared tongue with their beloved Dovestar, whispering goodbyes or farewells.

Fireheart stood there waiting for everyone to finish before paying his respect. Creampelt had just approached him and was now pressing her large body against his. She was heart-broken by her

Leader's death. Russetpelt and Brownleaf were currently licking Dovestar's fur before letting Weaselpelt and Lynxclaw doing the same.

The Clan was in pain as they just lost a cat as valuable as Dovestar... Their Leader of many seasons. When everyone finished, Fireheart ordered them to sit a vigil tonight in honor of their Leader before crouching down near Dovestar as the night was falling on the camp. Graystripe pressed his head against his friends before walking away to the Warriors'Den. Creampelt and the rest of the Queens went back to the Nursery while the rest of the Clan dispersed to enter their den as a dead silent could be heard from the gorge.

The only ones present near Dovestar's body were Hawkfeather , (who was filled with grief) , Fireheart himself, Kestrelfeather , and his mother Russetpelt and Brownleaf. They looked at each other with nothing but pure sadness as they gazed up at the stars *"Oh Starclan... Welcome her with honor... and help me protect her Clan..."* Fireheart prayed silently as he looked at the Silverpelt shining in all its glory.

(To be continued...)

Chapter 14 : Banishment and Rise of a new Leader

As the sun rose in the sky , announcing a bright new day, Fireheart stood next to the Rock-pile , his eyes clouded with sorrow as he looked at the dead body of a certain pale gray furred molly... His mind was reminding him the terrible truth : Dovestar , the majestic Leader of Skyclan. Two rows of cats were standing at each sides of the corpse and each of them had the same look of sorrow they arbored the previous day when Kestrelfeather told them the bad news.

Speaking of the Medicine Cat, she was standing near Dovestar's head , her tail coiled around her paws as she gazed at the one who had been her friend (despise the age difference). With a deep sigh, she looked at the Elders before nodding her head gravely. The oldest members of the Clan approached the dead body before gently picking it up and carrying it toward where it would rest forever.

"Goodbye Dovestar... I will never forget you..." Fireheart whispered softy to himself as he watched the Elders carrying the dead molly who had the kindness to let them join her Clan despise being once member of a Clan who chased Skyclan seasons ago. With a heavy sigh, he looked back at the Clan...*his* Clan... when the convoy was out of sight.

Some cats looked at him expectantly but others were still filled with sadness which he could understand. " Skyclan ! We may have lost Dovestar but we need to stay strong despise our loss... Dovestar was a noble Leader and she wouldn't want us to stay still and mourn for her... She would want us to move on !" was Fireheart's words to his Clan-mates who all looked at him the second he started talking.

When he finished, a murmur of agreement spread from the mass of furs in front of him and the fire pelted tom was glad his Clan agreed with him. But then someone stepped out of the crowd to face the

Deputy : it was the familiar pelt of Darkcloud , a cat who hated him and his comrades deeply because they were members of Thunderclan.

"Who do you think you are to tell what Dovestar want ?! You are nothing but a Thunderclan Filth ! Dovestar was wrong to chose you as our Deputy !" Those words caused an uproar from the rest of the Clan who voiced their disagreement for the gray tom. However, Darkcloud ignored his Clan-mates as he glared up at Skyclan Deputy with burning eyes " Skyclan is doomed ! Now with you as our Leader , we are cursed by Starclan itself !"

Fireheart was looking down at the gray tom with nothing but pure anger as he unsheathed his claws. He was desperately forcing himself to not pounce of his Clan-mate to tear his fur apart. Then a stern voice echoed which caught everyone's attention " How do you know about Starclan's wills Darkcloud ? Nothing !" Kestrelfeather said in an angry tone as she stepped closer to stand near her nephew who nodded at her gratefully.

"Fireheart will be a better Leader than you could ever be Dark*dirt* !" Graystripe snarled furiously to the gray tom who glared back at him with fury "What did you just say ?!" "I said Dark*dirt !*" In response, Darckloud went into a pouncing position but the second he was about to, something crashed against his side sending the gray tom into dust. As he got up , his amber eyes looked at the one who was responsible of this : Foxclaw.

The dark ginger tom was barring his teeth in disappointment " Attacking each other is forbidden by the Warrior Code Darkcloud ! Did you forget it ?!" The gray tom sneered with an evil grin as he slowly got up to face Foxclaw "Why would I follow the Warrior Code now that our noble Clan is running down because of that *Filth* !" Darkcloud hissed the last part with a face twisted with hatred for the bright flame colored Deputy.

"Apologize to my father !" Goldenpaw snarled angrily as she approached the gray tom. Fireheart felt proud for his adoptive daughter : Darkcloud was twice bigger than the recent-made apprentice but she staid strong despise this minor detail. No doubt she would be great Warrior one day.

Darckloud looked at the yellow furred she-apprentice with an evil smirk " What will you do if I don't ?" he asked her with a sneer but was totally unprepared by what she snarled next "I will fight you !" Fireheart's heart was filled with proud at those words and glancing at Creampelt , he could see she was thinking the same.

"Count us in too !" Featherpaw said as she stepped closer to stand next to her friend who looked at her with surprise. Stormpaw did the same, growling at Darkcloud.

" If you hurt them... You have to go through us first !" Whitepaw hissed as she approached the trio along with Nightpaw and Darkcloud's apprentice , Sootpaw. "Sootpaw ! What are you doing ?!" his mentor asked him with disbelief and a bit of anger "I'm helping my friends !" the gray apprentice hissed back defiantly to his mentor who looked back at him with shock "Friends ? With them ? Did you lost your mind ?! Those *things* cannot be trusted !"

"You're wrong ! They are my Clan-mates and I will defend them with my life if I have too !" Sootpaw responded in a determined tone which surprised everyone. Fireheart, who had some reserves because of the close relationship the gray apprentice had with his daughter, smiled in appreciation.

" I knew you would be failure the moment I see you ! To be honest I never wanted to be your mentor ! You are as pathetic as those *beasts* !" Darkcloud hissed back in pure hatred as his amber eyes glared down at his apprentice. At those words, Sootpaw's anger was replaced by shock as he stepped back, tears were starting to fall from his eyes . Darkcloud's words shocked many and all Cats were glaring at the gray tom who backed away in fear when he saw the glares he was receiving while the apprentices were reassuring their Den-mate. Creampelt was growling in pure anger when she heard this and yowled in fury as she pounced on the gray tom who found himself pinned down.

Some Skyclan Warriors winced at the ferocity, Creampelt was showing. Usually, she was a calm and gentle molly... Now... she seemed bloodthirsty. Fireheart and Graystripe shared a glance : they had seen the large molly pissed before but never like this. The apprentices looked at the scene with wide eyes as they never saw

someone so fierce. Fireheart , despise his anger toward Darckloud for hurting Sootpaw, knew he couldn't stand there so he stepped closer before yelling loudly "STOP !"

The two fighters stopped dead in their tracks, panting. Darkcloud was covered in dust , bruises and blood while Creampelt had a claw marks on her shoulder but despise this, she was perfectly fine .... even if the large molly was still growling at her opponent. Sandpelt, Creampelt's mother, stepped closer to whisper comforting words into her daughter's ears while Fireheart approached the gray tom who looked back at him with a glare.

The Deputy's green eyes narrowed down at the grey tom unaware that a ray of Sun landed on his him which caused his fur to look like a blazing fire as his eyes brightened. Darkcloud became tense as he looked at the Clan Deputy : Fireheart looked like a ball of fire at the moment which scared him for a moment before shaking his head so he could snarl defiantly.

However, the fiery pelted tom staid calm as he said those words " Darkloud... Despise insulting your Clan-mates, I'm willing to give you a choice : either you stay among us or you leave... *now"* His voice was calm but there was an undertone of menace that sent chills down everyone's spines. Darkcloud staid silent for a moment before getting up "I would rather leave that stay in a Clan full of idiots !" Those word caused another uproar from the rest of Skyclan.

"Darckloud ! From this moment, you are no longer a member of Skyclan, if we find you after midday, we will threat you like any trespassers ! Now leave !" Fireheart hissed with contained anger and Darkcloud sneered defiantly before trotting away. As he passed through the mass of gathered Cats, some were hissing at him but he didn't cared. Everyone watched as the gray tom left the gorge to who-know-where.

Fireheart then looked at his Clan-mates before saying ordering them to disperse to do their own business. Then he organized the patrols before approaching the apprentices who looked up at him as he stepped closer. The fiery pelted tom looked back and forth between his daughter and the other apprentices all with a smile "I'm proud of you... All of you..." The young Cats purred in content by the praises

and Fireheart chuckled in amusement before looking at Sootpaw

"Don't listen to what Darkcloud said... You are a brave and strong apprentice...not a failure..." Those words seemed to content the gray apprentice because he nodded back gratefully at his Deputy before asking "Fireheart... Now that Darkcloud is gone... Who will be my mentor ?" It was a good question... Fireheart went deep in thought as he thought about which cat would be a good mentor to the young apprentice.

The Warriors were all in-experimented... all except one. Fireheart smiled to himself and waited to be receive his lives before announcing his decision " You will see... don't worry I will make sure you have a good mentor..." Sootpaw nodded in appreciation before he and Goldenpaw nuzzled each other. "If you two plan to become mates in the future I won't stop you" The Deputy said with a mischievous look on his face and those words caused the two to blush madly "DADDYYYYYYYY !" Goldenpaw whined loudly which caused her father (and her friends) to snicker in amusement.

Leaving the apprentices behind, Fireheart approached his mate who was resting on her nest. The large cream furred molly purred as her mate pressed his head against her's and she tenderly licked his face "Are you okay Fireheart ?" she asked him gently and he looked at her " Don't worry about me... What about you ?"

"I am fine... now that Darkcloud is gone... We can live in peace !" "I can't agree more..." The fiery furred tom whispered back in agreement as he nuzzled her neck much to her delight as she purred loudly in content.

They cuddled each other for a moment before walking away after wishing his mate a good day. Then he called his apprentice before the two of them went out of the gorge for a training session. To make things better, Weaselpelt joined them with Goldenpaw and the four of them trained together.

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The night was falling on Skyclan's territory and Kestrelfeather was leading her nephew to Skyrock : a large flat rock at the top of the

gorge. Fireheart had trained for a long time with his apprentice , his daughter and her mentor before the four of them went hunting. After that, his day was quite busy but now it was time. He was kinda nervous though...he was about to receive his nine lives from Starclan after all.

But he was scared... Neither Bluestar , his beloved mentor, nor Dovestar talked about how passed the ceremony except the Medicine Cats. Creampelt and his longtime friend tried to comfort him and it worked...partially. But despise his uneasiness, he was also curious (like usual nothing new) as he wondered WHO will give him his lives. Rusetpelt and Brownleaf, his mothers were also there and his heart was filled with a warm feeling when he saw how much they were proud of him.

All his friends and family wished him good luck before he followed Kestrelfeather as the two climbed up to reach their destination. When they arrived on the flat rock, he looked at his Aunt with worry in his emerald green eyes. Kestrelfeather looked at her nephew with calm and warmth "Don't be afraid Fireheart just follow my lead and everything would be fine~" Her calm voice seemed to work as he took a deep breath before waiting for her instructions.

"Laid down and close your eyes... Starclan will wait until you are asleep to talk with you~" The pale brown she-cat inquired softy and he did what he was told. The fiery pelted tom closed his eyes and waited. After a moment, he felt something nudging his side and he slowly opened his eyes to see his aunt standing above him "Get up Fireheart~"

The Skyclan Deputy slowly jumped on his paws before opening his eyes wide in shock as he looked round : the two of them were no longer on the flat surface of Skyrock ! Instead, they were standing in the middle of a hill filled with green grasses and some flowers. A warm breeze ruffled his fur and it comforted the tom as he smelled the air : it smelled clean...as if a rain storm had passed recently.

But then he looked up at the sky and he was surprised to see the stars which looked closer than usual. Suddenly, the stars began to became bigger and bigger and the fire pelted tom couldn't stop himself for gaping in shock as the Spirits of Starclan climbed down

the Silverpelt to gather around them.

Soon all spirits were surrounding the two and Fireheart was trying his best to not get blind by the bright light coming from their star-covered-pelts. But then he noticed something... the Starclan Cats , the ones most closer the him, looked familiar and Fireheart's eyes widened in happiness and joy *" Bluestar !"* His mentor was there before him ! *"Dovestar !"* the former Skyclan Leader was there as well. Then he caught the smell of someone he loved dearly during his apprenticeship *"Spottedleaf !"* The pretty tortoiseshell molly was there and she was smiling at him. What was Thunderclan's spirits were doing here among Skyclan's ? That's a mystery but he didn't care for this detail at the moment.

He wanted to yowl his happiness but forced himself to stay silent as suddenly, the silence was broken by a strange deep but calm voice "Hello Fireheart... are you ready to receive your nine lives ?" a voice echoed around him and the flame colored thought every cats of Starclan were talking at the same time. Then he took a deep breath before looking at the Gathered Starclan Spirits "I'm ready"

At those words, a familiar golden tabby tom with green eyes and a thick fur like lion's mane stepped closer and Fireheart instantly recognized him. It was Lionheart , Graystripe's mentor and the former Thunderclan Deputy who was killed during an attack by Shadowclan moons ago. "Lionheart! Is it really you? The flame pelted tom asked the noble Warrior who didn't replied.

When the golden Warrior was close enough,he stopped and pressed his nose against Fireheart's head. The contact burned the fiery pelted tom like the hottest flame and the coldest ice. Fireheart's instinct screamed at him to back away ,but he couldn't ***"With this life I give you Courage ! Use it well in defense of your clan !"*** Lionheart said calmly as he gave the younger tom a life.

At those words, a bolt of energy passed through the flame colored tim like lightning ,setting his fur on end and filling his senses with a thunderous roar. His mind was filled with a chaotic swirl of battles and hunts ,the feeling of claws raking across fur and teeth meeting in the flesh of prey.

Soon the pain disappeared ,leaving a trembling Fireheart behind . The darkness faded as he found himself on the grassy hill again. If that was one life received,he had eight more to go... "How will I bear it ?" he thought to himself before he looked up at the noble Thunderclan Warrior "You have been through so much... I'm proud of you" Lionheart said gently as he turned around to return among the Starclan Cats.

Then another cat rose from its seat before approaching Fireheart. At first the fiery pelted didn't recognize him, but then he caught a dark,dappled coat and bushy red tail . Thanks to those details, he recognized the cat :it was Redtail. Fireheart had never met the Thunderclan Deputy,who was murdered by Tigerstar on the very day Fireheart came to the forest as a kittypet. He had sought out the truth about his death but sadly was unable to expose the truth to Thunderclan.

Redtail gave him a life for justice while thanking him for saving Ravenpaw from death. The fiery pelted tom saluted the former Thunderclan Deputy before Redtail returned to his seat near Lionheart . After that, a third cat emerged from the ranks of Starclan.

This time Fireheart's jaws dropped open when he recognized the beautiful tabby she-cat ,her coat glimmering with a silvery sheen .It was Graystripe's lost love Silverstream ,the Riverclan queen who died bearing their kits. Her paws scarcely skimmed the ground as she bent down to him. "***With this life i give you loyalty to what you know to be right***" Silverstream announced gently and Fireheart knew why she was giving up a life : he had protected his longtime friend's relationship with Crookedstar's daughter even if it was forbidden by the Warrior Code. "***Use it well to guide your clan in times of trouble !***"

The fire pelted tom instinctively braced himself for another agonizing pang , but this time there was less painful as the new life rushed through him. He noticed a warm glow of love,and realized dimly that that was what had marked Silverstream's life : her love

for her clan, for Graystripe, and for the kits she had died to give life . As the pretty tabby was about to walk away, Fireheart stopped her "Wait ! Don't you have a message for Graystripe ?"

In response, she looked at him with sorrow which answered his question.

One by one, Cats of Starclan came to give them his remaining lives : Gorsepaw gave him a life for ***mentoring***, Brindleface , the Queen who nursed Cloudtail when he was a tiny kit, gave him a life for ***mother's love*** (this life shocked him because he expected it to be gentle and loving but instead it was ferocious and savage) , Yellowfang gave him a life for ***compassion***

Seeing those three Cats among Spirits of Starclan was a real shock to Fireheart : they must have died somehow... He was especially heart-broken for Gorsepaw : he had helped carrying the apprentice, who was a tiny kit back then, after he and Graystripe lead Windclan back to their territory after their forced exil by Brokenstar.

The last time he saw them was just before being exiled from Thunderclan by the treacherous Tigerstar , his worse enemy. He was wondering how they died when a familiar sweet scent caught his nose and he turned his head to see none other than Spottedleaf , the pretty Medicine Cat from Thunderclan, killed moons ago by Clawface of Shadowclan.

"Spottedleaf..." Fireheart whispered with emotion as he faced his first love after so long. She sometimes came to him during his dreams but it was the first time she looked so neat since her death. ***"With this life I give you love ! Use it well, for all the cats in your care ... and especially for Creampelt~"*** Spottedleaf announced in her honey-like voice as she touched his head with her nose. Fireheart was sure this life would be painful like the precedent ones but then he purred as a sensation of warmth filled his body : it was pure love.

As he regained consciousness, the fire pelted tom looked back at the pretty tortoiseshell who was looking back at him proudly before walking away. Even if he was a bit upset that she didn't say much, Fireheart was glad she approved of his choice : he could love

Creampelt without cheating on Spottedleaf. He loved both she-cats dearly and if possible he would love to be with both of them.

Another Cat approached him and his heart missed a bump when he recognized his mentor Bluestar : she looked like a young molly again with her blue-gray fur shining with countless stars as she approached him, as proud as a Lion would. Her blue eyes looked at her former apprentice with warmth " Welcome Fireheart...my apprentice...my warrior... Again I want to tell you how sorry I am to not have listened to you about Tigerstar... Because of my foolishness, you were banished from Thunderclan..."

Fireheart looked at his former mentor with sincerity "Like I said the last time, I forgave you for not listening to me... You trusted Tigerstar with your life... I can't blame you..." Bluestar shot him a grateful look before putting her nose on his forehead saying ***" With this life I grant you Nobility, certainty, and faith ! Use it well as you lead your Clan in the ways of StarClan and the warrior code !"***

If the life of Spottedleaf was gentle , Bluestar's life wasn't ! As he absorbed the new life he just received , he was panting heavily as if he just fought in the toughest of battles. "I'm proud of you Fireheart... Shame you are not Thunderclan new Leader..." Bluestar inquired with a hint of disappointment before she turned around to join her comrades just as Dovestar stepped forward.

"Hello Fireheart... my Warrior...My Deputy ! I knew you would make a good Leader one day... And if what Bluestar and Spottedleaf said are right... I don't doubt Skyclan would be in good paws !"

Blinking, Fireheart glanced at the two mollies in question only to see them looking away in embarrassment. ***"Anyway... With this life I give you Honor ! Use to protect your Clan-mates from the Oldest to the youngest and to make the hardest decision !"*** Just like Bluestar's, Dovestar's life was painful and Fireheart had a hard time to absorb it but when he did, he seemed to collapse at any second.

However, his spirit was filled with the strength of the lives he received and when the entire Starclan got up, he knew he had to do the same. Bluestar and Dovestar looked at each other before saying

"We hail you by your new name, Firestar ! Your old life is no more ... You have now received the nine lives of a leader, and StarClan grants you the guardianship of Skyclan ! Defend it well; care for young and old; honor your Warrior ancestors and the traditions of the warrior code; live each life with pride and honor !"

"FIRESTAR ! FIRESTAR ! FIRESTAR ! FIRESTAR !" Just like when the Clan cheered for a new Warrior, the Starclan Cats cheered his new name. Then Bluestar stepped closer and pressed her nose against her former apprentice's " It is over... You can wake up~" "Good lucks Firestar ! We will always be there if you need us~" Spottedleaf added sweetly as darkness filled Firestar's vision.

A few seconds later, Firestar woke up and found his aunt Kestrelfeather sitting beside him. In her blue eyes, she saw the proud shining from them which filled his heart with warmth. He was a Leader now. "You should rest now...You looks exhausted~" The Medicine Cat inquired her nephew in a gentle tone but he shook his head in denial "No I have something important to do first..."

The fire pelted tom slowly climbed down Skyrock to enter the gorge where some cats were eating , sunbathing or simply waiting to hear who will go on patrol. As Firestar appeared, all eyes were turned toward him : all of them became exited when they saw what was on his face : a small faint star-shaped mark... Starclan's mark.

Cheers and excited yowls echoed through the gorge from the entire Clan as Firestar jumped on top of the Rock-pile before using the familiar call ***"Let's all Cats old enough to catch their own preys join here beneath the Rock-pile for a Clan Meeting !"***

At those words, the members of Skyclan approached their new Leader and Firestar could see the happiness in all their eyes. Creampelt was looking up at her mate with pure love while his mothers Russetpelt and Brownleaf looked proud of their son for being the new Clan Leader.

His daughter Goldenpaw , who was sitting among the other apprentices, was looking up at him with pure adoration which warmed his heart. Featherpaw, his own apprentice , looked just as

happy as her friend. Graystripe, his longtime comrade, looked happy and content. Foxclaw bowed his head in respect for his new Leader and Firestar knew he could count on him. As he looked at his Clanmates , Firestar was wondering who would make a good Deputy : the new Deputy needs to be experimented and wise apart of being strong and loyal. It was a difficult choice but then he knew who he could chose.

He would have chosen Graystripe but the dark gray tom wasn't serious enough (*cough*) to be Deputy. Then he took a deep breath before saying the ritual words " ***Skyclan ! I received my nine lives from Starclan and its time to appoint a new Deputy ! I say these words before Starclan , so that the spirits of our warrior ancestors may hear and approve of my choice. The new deputy of Skyclan will be Nightfur !"***

The black tabby tom is question blinked in surprise : he seemed shocked by happy. Firestar wasn't surprised though as Nightfur's modesty was a bit similar to Whitestorm's. The Senior Warrior wouldn't join the Elders before a long time and his wiseness was well known.

"Firestar ! Cats of Skyclan ! Never in my life I thought I would receive such a honor ! I'm honored to be your Deputy ! I promised to serve our Clan with my life !" Nightfur announced in his usual firm tone and the whole Clan started cheering for their new Deputy. Firestar stood there , watching his Clan-mates congratulating the Senior Warrior. He was Leader of Skyclan, a loving mate, good friends, a loyal and wise Deputy and strong and healthy Clan. For now, Firestar had everything he want and he would never change it one bit.

(To be continued...)

ALLEGIANCE 2

Leader :

-Firestar : Bright-flame colored tom with green emerald eyes

(Apprentice : Featherpaw)

Deputy :

-Nightfur : Black tabby tom with Green eyes.

(Apprentice : Sootpaw)

Medicine Cat :

-Kestrelfeather : pale brown molly with deep blue eyes

(Apprentice : Spotfur)

Warriors :

-Graystripe : dark gray tom with yellow eyes and a stripe of darker gray running down his back *(Apprentice : Foxpaw)*

- Cloudtail : Long white furred tom with blue eyes

-Croweye : black tom with green eyes

- Mistfur : gray and white she-cat with blue eyes

-Addereye : tortoiseshell tom with green eyes (Apprentice : Nightpaw)

- Foxclaw : dark ginger tom with yellow eyes *(Apprentice : Stormpaw)*

-Weaselpelt : brown and white molly with deep blue eyes *(Apprentice : Goldenpaw)*

-Brownleaf : pale brown she-cat with green eyes*(Apprentice : Darkpaw)*

-Russetpelt : bright ginger she-cat with darker stripes and amber eyes *(Apprentice : Whitepaw)*

- Sweetwhiskers : silver tabby molly with amber eyes

-Robinfeather : dark ginger molly with yellow eyes

Apprentices :

-Spotfur : tortoiseshell she-cat with green eyes

- Goldenpaw : pale yellow she-cat with blue eyes

- Featherpaw : silver tabby she-cat with sky blue eyes and a plumy tail

- Stormpaw : dark gray tom with amber eyes

- Sootpaw : gray tom with golden eyes

- Darkpaw : pale gray tom with darker stripes and golden eyes

- Foxpaw : dark ginger she-cat with pale green eyes

- Whitepaw : dark gray she-cat with a single white paw and blue eyes

- Nightpaw : black she-cat with a white spot on her chest and leaf-green eyes.

Queens :

- Brightheart : ginger and white she-cat with blue eyes

- Lynxclaw : large beige furred molly with dark brown spots and yellow eyes

- Creampelt : large cream furred molly with sky blue eyes

-Ambershine : amber molly with sky blue eyes

Elders :

- Mudfur : brown tom with darker stripes and amber eyes

- Maplefur : tortoiseshell she-cat with green eyes and a dappled coat

-Brownclaw : brown tabby tom with green eyes

- Sandpelt : large cream furred molly with sky blue eyes

- Snowpelt : white molly with amber eyes

-Hawkfeather : large gray tabby tom with amber eyes

Chapter 15 : Surprise from the Past

A warm breeze brushed against his fur as Firestar patrolled the borders of Skyclan Territory. He decided to go alone so he could thought about what happened in the previous days and so, he left his freshly designated Deputy to take care of the camp. He still couldn't believe the fact he was Skyclan's Leader and he was deeply honored by his new functions.

But then his heart clenched as the memory of Dovestar (the previous Leader) and the pain of loosing her deepened. The pale gray furred molly was noble and honorable as she had the kindness to allow him and his comrades to join her Clan despise being members of one of the Clans who chased their ancestors from the Forest many seasons ago.

So far the fiery pelted tom enjoyed his life in his adoptive Clan but deep down he still missed Thunderclan. He had goods friends among the other Clans and he wondered if they were fine. Firestar knew Tigerstar would NEVER live in peace with the other three Clans but he couldn't do anything about it. It wasn't his problem anymore.

It had been MOONS since he last saw the Forest Territories and he had a Clan to take care of now. He couldn't just go back and leave Skyclan behind. No... But there was another reason why he wouldn't go back : after all, in the Forest, he was seen as nothing more than a kittypet by many. Of course there were some exceptions (Tallstar, Onewhisker, Mistyfoot , Whitestorm, Littlecloud ...). Everyday he had to prove he was their equal but it seemed like a lost cause.

Here in Skyclan, he was another cat and got everything he wanted : the respect of his Clan-mates, a loving family... Why would he want to go back ? As for Graystripe, he couldn't go back because he was

still considered as a traitor thanks to his forbidden relationship with Silverstream, Crookedstar's daughter. Leopardfur, the Riverclan's Deputy, still hold a grudge against them because of Whiteclaw's death and must be glad to not have them around anymore.

Cloudtail ,for his part, had no reasons to go back either. After all, he was known as a trouble-maker back in Thunderclan and most of the Clans saw him as nothing but another kittypet. Soon, the long white furred tom would have a family on his own with the she-cat he loved. Like his Uncle, he wasn't treated as a kittypet but as a normal member of a Clan. Sure Brindleface must miss him dearly but she must be the only one.

Brightheart missed her family and was pained to have left them but she didn't regretted her decision to follow them in their exile. Here she gained many friends and was loved by everyone in the Clan and soon she would have kits of her own. Firestar knew she was excited to have her first litter as she remembered the fact she helped Creampelt to raised Featherpaw, Stormpaw and Goldenpaw back when they were innocent kits.

Firestar took a deep breath as he then caught the scent of a rabbit nearby. He crouched down and silently stalked the rodent who didn't saw him...until it was far too late. The fire pelted tom pounced on his prey, pinned it down before snapping its neck, killing it. Firestar then picked the dead body before walking back to camp. He had finished his patrol anyway.

As he walked, he remembered what one of his patrol discovered two days ago at the border near Two-Legs Dens : the dead body of a former Skyclan Warrior who was willingly chose to leave the Clan.... Darkcloud. Addereye and his patrol were the ones who found his body and from what he heard, he was killed by a Dog judging by the scent.

They buried his body exactly where they found it before returning back to camp to tell the news. Of course, no one seemed to care much about their former Clan-mates and they simply ignored it. Darkcloud was not a well-liked member of the Clan anyway...especially since Firestar and the rest of the former Thunderclanners joined Skyclan.

Sootpaw, Darkcloud's apprentice, wasn't even sad for his former mentor and gladly enjoyed being Nightfur's apprentice. Firestar grew fond of the gray apprentice and he wouldn't mind him being with his adoptive daughter Goldenpaw.

Anyway, as Firestar entered the gorge, he stopped for a second to watch the Clan : all of them were either enjoying themselves, chatting or waiting to go patrolling or hunting. Looking around, he noticed that Graystripe wasn't there *"Maybe on hunting patrol ?"* the young Leader thought himself as he looked ahead. Smiling, the fire pelted tom climbed down the rocks before walking toward the nursery, with his rabbit still dangling between his jaws.

He was about to enter the cave when someone called him "Firestar !" Sighing internally to himself, he turned his head to face Nightfur, his Deputy. The Skyclan Leader putted his prey down before facing the newcomer "What's going on Nightfur ? Did something happened ?" he asked the Warrior calmly but with a hint of concern in his voice.

The black tabby tom looked serious as he responded " Addereye and his apprentice just came back from their training session and he told me he caught the smell of an intruder in our territory... a molly from what he said..." At those words, the fiery pelted Leader went deep in thought before saying "Maybe its nothing... this molly might be just passing..."

Nightfur shook his head before adding " I thought the same but yesterday, Foxclaw told me he caught the scent of a molly... I don't think its a coincidence..." Firestar nodded in agreement "Ask Foxclaw to investigate... if its the same molly... Send Addereye with him..." His Deputy nodded before trotting away toward the dark ginger tom who was sharing a vole with Robinfeather. The Skyclan Leader watched him for a moment before picking up his rabbit and entering the nursery.

In the cave, he found Lynxclaw, Brightheart, Ambershine and his beloved mate chatting with each other. But then they stopped when they noticed the newcomer. "Firestar what can we do for you ?" Lynxclaw asked him gently before she caught the sight of the rodent. The fire pelted tom didn't respond and instead walked

straight to his mate before gently putting his prey in front of her.

"Thank you Firestar ! I am starving !" Creampelt purred as she teared the skin of the rodent apart with her fangs. Snorting in amusement, Firestar couldn't help but asking with a mischievous grin "Oh ? When were you ever starving Creampelt ?~" The large molly glared up at him while her Den-mates could retain their snickers. "Meanie..." the cream furred Queen mumbled with a pout before returning back to her rabbit.

"But you love me because of this don't you ?" Firestar asked her teasingly as he nuzzled her neck. Creampelt couldn't the purr of content coming from her throat as she responded "Of course I do mouse-brain~" She licked his cheek lovingly before resuming her lunch.

Firestar looked at her warmly before his green eyes landed on the other Queens " Do you need something as well ?" he asked politely and he got appreciative smiles from the three other mollies "No thank you Firestar... Cloudtail brang me a vole earlier..." Brightheart responded gently , her eyes sparkling at the mention of her mate. "Thank you Firestar... but no we don't need anything right Lynxclaw ?" Ambershine asked the other Queen who nodded in agreement.

"Alright then... I will leave you be and could you keep an eye of her ?" the fiery pelted tom glanced back at his mate when he said 'her' " Of course !" the trio responded just as Creampelt finished her rabbit. She grumbled in annoyance when her mate inquired her Den-mates to watch her but she quickly calmed down as she felt touched by how much he cared for her.

He gave her one last lick on the forehead before stepping out of the nursery. But as he was outside, someone almost crashed against him and he turned his head to see Whitepaw , Russetpelt's apprentice. "Hey what the hurry ?" he asked her gently as she stopped before him "Firestar ! My mentor sent me to take care of the Elders..." The Skyclan Leader nodded but still couldn't understand why she seemed....sad "Something happened am I right ?"

When he saw her nodding, he asked in a calm tone "What happened

?" "Me and Nightpaw got into an argument..." "What for ?" he inquired gently as he wondered why two good friends would suddenly...argue with each other. Well...it usually happen but it must be for a good reason. " I was stalking a mouse when a rabbit passed in front of me.... I killed it but then Nightpaw appeared and became angry because I killed HER prey... We argued about that before Russetpelt came... She grounded us for our behavior..."

"And where is Nightpaw now ?" Firestar asked her still calmly and she responded by saying "She is with Stormpaw..." "Thank you Whitepaw... No go back to your den..." Whitepaw looked up at him with wide eyes "But my mentor said-" "I will talk with your mentor.... But promise me it will be the LAST time you argue with your Den-mates "

The apprentice looked at him for a second for whispering "I promise Firestar... Thank you" With a smile, he dismissed her and she happily ran toward Featherpaw who seemed to brighten up at the sight of her friend.

Smiling to himself, Firestar then approached Nightpaw who was sharing a sparrow with Stormpaw. When she saw him coming, the black she-apprentice tensed and waited patiently for the Clan Leader to speak. She was surprised to not see disappointment in the tom's emerald eyes but Firestar didn't noticed as he looked at Stormpaw "Can you leave the both of us alone for a bit ? She and I need to talk..."

His tone was calm and serious and Stormpaw knew he had to obey. The dark gray apprentice nodded before giving a reassuring smile to his friend and trotting away. Now alone, Firestar looked back at Nightpaw who seemed nervous all of a sudden "I heard what happened..." he began to say and those words caused the apprentice to flinch in fear.

"I know you are upset because Whitepaw killed the prey you were stalking but... can you really blame her ? After she didn't know" Nightpaw seemed to deflate at his words as she looked down with shame "You should apologize to her... I lift your punishment for this time but promise me to not do this again.." The fiery pelted tom inquired her gently but also sternly.

"I promise Firestar... Where is Whitepaw ?" she asked him softy and he looked toward the gray apprentice who was still laying near Featherpaw. Nightpaw took a few steps toward the two when she stopped. She was hesitating but then she looked at her Leader before asking " What about Russetpelt ? She would be angry if-" "Don't worry about that... Go now.." Firestar interrupted her gently and she nodded before approaching the two other she-apprentices.

Whitepaw watched her with a tense body but relaxed when Nightpaw said something to her. Soon the two pressed their heads against each other and Firestar understood that the two must have reconciled. With a smile, he turned his head and saw Russetpelt approaching.

When he saw her looking at the apprentices with a frown, he knew he had to step in so he approached his mother before greeting her warmly. Russetpelt's stern behavior turned into warmth as her eyes landed on her son and she letted out a purr as she licked his face "Hello son how are you ? I didn't see you this morning~" she inquired him warmly with a purr and he looked back at her with a smile " Sorry about that... I was patrolling the borders... I heard about Whitepaw and Nightpaw's argument..."

Russetpelt's smiling face became stern again as she looked at the apprentices " I wonder why aren't they taking care of the Elders like I ordered them too ?" she mumbled angrily to herself as she took a step forward toward the two. " I think I might be responsible for that..." "What ?" Russetpelt said as she looked at her son with wide eyes "I lifted their punishment for this time... I also inquired the two of them to apologize to each other..." Firestar responded calmly but still a bit nervous because of the anger present in his mother's eyes.

Russetpelt eyed him for a moment before looking back at the apprentices then to her son "I forgive you son... I can't stay mad at you for too long it seems~" she remarked with an amused smile as she pressed her face against his affectionately. He purred in response before the touching moment was broken by a familiar voice " Firestar !" He turned his head to see his second mother Brownleaf approaching the duo. The brown furred molly pressed her body against her son before nuzzling her mate lovingly.

Firestar purred in responded as he nuzzled his side fondly while Russetpelt licked her cheek in response. "Son can I borrow my mate for a moment ? I need her desperately at the moment~" Brownleaf inquired with a wink and instantlyn the Skyclan Leader understood what she meant. "Alright then I will leave you be.... See you later"

The two nodded with a smile on their faces before walking away to their 'secret' den. The Flame colored Leader watched them go before approaching the fresh-kill pile to have something for himself but the moment he was about to pick up a vole someone called out for him " FIRESTAR !"

The young Leader turned his head to see Foxclaw and Addereye and with them were three other cats : Sweetwhiskers , Weaselpet and a molly he didn't recognized because of the dirt on her fur.

He left his lunch behind to approach the group just as the rest of the Clan stopped what they were doing to look at the newcomer...particularly on the intruder with them.

"We found her near the place we caught her scent ! She was resting..." Foxclaw explained as he eyed the intruder suspiciously. Firestar looked at the rest of the group who nodded in agreement.

"Did she tried to fight you ?" he asked the dark ginger tom who shook his head in response.

Nodding to the Warrior, Firestar cautiously approached her before lowering his head down to inspect her. Her fur was covered in dirt and dust and she seemed to not have a decent meal since a long time. Pity took him as he asked in a calm tone " Hey what's your name ?" he asked her gently and was completely taken aback when he heard a familiar voice asking "Fireheart is that you ?"

The she-cat raised her head and Firestar faced a pair of familiar blue eyes who widened at the sight of him. He had seen those eyes before and then he caught her smell. A smell he knew all too well... His own eyes widened when he finally realized who was this she-cat and couldn't help but shouting in pure shock.

"Mistyfoot ?!"

(To be continued...)

Chapter 16 : Shadows of the Past

Firestar was in the Medicine Cat's Den , sitting before a nest where Mistyfoot was currently resting. Soon after he recognized her, he called for Kestrelfeather and he escorted the Riverclan Warrior all the way to where they were. "Is she alright ?" The Skyclan Leader asked his aunt as she examined her patient.

The brown molly eyed her nephew with a reassuring smile on her face "She will be fine Firestar don't worry.... All she need is food and some rests..." The fiery pelted Leader sighed deeply in relief before looking back at Mistyfoot who was looking at him with shock "Firestar ?" she asked him questioningly.

The fire colored tom nodded at her before looking at his Aunt "Could you leave us for a moment ?" Kestrelfeather looked back and forth between the two before nodding. Silently, she stepped out of her den , leaving the two behind. With a deep sigh, Firestar looked back at the Riverclan Warrior and was to say something but she beat him to it "So that's where you were during all this time ?" she asked him curiously , her blue eyes scanning him with interest.

"For some moons yes... Graystripe is here as well...along with his kits..." He instantly regret saying as she saw the shock in her eyes "Silverstream's kits are here ?! Are they alright ?!" "Yes they are ! The two of them are now apprentices..." He calmly responded and his answer seemed to satisfy her because her tense body became more relaxed.

" How are you alive ? Tigerstar told everyone you were dead !" Mistyfoot announced in disbelief and his eyes widened in surprise by this and asked " What do you mean ?" Internally, he knew that it was another lie from his longtime enemy but he needed some answers.

Mistyfoot took a deep breath before explaining " A few moons ago, during a Gathering, Tigerstar told us about the rogues and the death of Bluestar..... But he also said that you and Graystripe died fighting the intruders as was your apprentice ...Cloudpaw was it ?" He nodded " Some of us were shocked by the news but they were some who seemed relieved to not have you around..."

Mistyfoot ,at the last part, sent a hesitant glance at the fiery pelted Leader who only stood there, calmly. Firestar was not really surprised : he knew some cats in the other Clans (along from his former Clan) despised him so it wasn't a great shock. When she saw he was still calm, she resumed her explanation " Tigerstar also tell us about the death of Graystripe's kits by one of the rogues... I was devastated... Stonepelt tried to comfort me but..." she shook her head, as if she was trying to get rid of a dis-pleasant memory.

"Tallstar seemed devastated as well when he heard about your death...In fact, the majority of Windclan looked sad..." At those words, Firestar internally smiled : Tallstar had always been friendly toward him because he looked just like the black-and-white tom's old friend Jake.

But his thoughts were interrupted by a certain blue furred molly who asked " How come are you here ?" Firestar looked back at her before sighting "Its a long story.... But it began after Bluestar's death..." he began to say before explaining what happened to them to the very beginning : their banishment from Thunderclan, the meeting with Creampelt, the journey and the discovery of his true heritage.

Mistyfoot had staid silent for the whole time, her mind was processing what he just explained. When Firestar finished his story, she still staid silent. Worried, he finally inquired "Are you alright Mistyfoot ?" She looked up at him after those words "Yes its just... I don't understand why Tigerstar would lie to everyone... What would he gain ?" "Tigerstar is a murderer, a traitor and untrustworthy cat !" Firestar snarled in anger which completely shocked the Riverclan molly as she looked back at him with wide eyes.

"What do you mean ? Tigerstar is a brute I admit but... Aren't you going a bit too far ?" she asked him with a confused raise-brow

which caused him to snort in disgust. "Tigerstar is not what everyone think he is... He killed Redtail during a fight with Riverclan to become Deputy... Later he tried to kill his apprentice Ravenpaw because he saw what he did... I stopped counting how many times he tried to kill me... and he killed Bluestar after leading the rogues STRAIGHT into our camp !"

Mistyfoot was horrified by what she just heard and looked down at the floor , still shocked. Firestar took deep breaths to calm down before apologize "I'm sorry Mistyfoot... I shouldn't have snapped at you..." "Its fine Fireh- I mean Firestar... I understand..." she replied softy in response. " Mistyfoot... What are you doing all the way out here ? Shouldn't you be with Riverclan ?"

He flinched when he saw the rage shining in her blue eyes "Yes I should be ! But thanks to TIGERSTAR....". At those words, Firestar became confused and asked "Tigerstar ? Crookedstar is Riverclan's Leader not this murderer !" "Oh yes I remember... You don't know..." Mistyfoot realized a few seconds after he spoke and opened her mouth to explain. "Crookestar died a few moons ago... Leopardstar took his place but it wasn't long before Tigerstar attacked our Clan..."

Firestar couldn't believe what he was hearing "Why would he do that ? Thunderclan Territory had enough prey !" " Some times before Croodkedstar's death, a fire destroyed a large part of Thunderclan Territory and we helped them..." she stopped her explanation to let out a deep growl of anger , adding "We shouldn't have..."

"What happened next ?" he asked her hurriedly but deep down he was worried of what she would say next. He was not disappointed "They staid on our territory for a few days and then without warning , Thunderclan attacked us... and chased us from our lands !" Firestar was unable to say a simple word as he was too shocked by those revelations.

" Many of us were injured... Crookedstar among them... but we managed to reach Fourtrees and entered Windclan territory... Tallstar allowed us to stay as long as we wanted as his guests... Some Windclan Warriors weren't really happy about this... Not that

I blame them..."

Firestar internally smiled : he approved Tallstar's decision. Compassion was something he valued along with honor, courage loyalty. "I'm sorry for what Tigerstar did to your Clan Mistyfoot.... But why are you here ?" " I was going to that part..." The blue molly whispered before taking a deep breath " At the next Gathering, Leopardstar ordered Tigerstar to give us back our territory but.... He refused and threatened to kill us if we come back... Windclan promised to help in case Tigerstar try something and surprisingly, Shadowclan decided to help as well... They just manage to get rid of an epidemic and still they wanted to help... "

"An epidemic ? Really ?" Firestar asked with disbelief "Yes some cats died because of it but still, they recruited some willing rogues to repopulate their Clan... Thanks to Cinderpelt from Thunderclan... she was the one who fount the cure.." A purr of content escaped Firestar's throat as he heard this : Cinderpelt wouldn't stop surprising him.

Mistyfoot giggled in amusement at his behavior before going on on her story . The fiery pelted Skyclan Leader staid silent , listening to what the Riverclan she-cat was saying " After a few days, we decided to attack Thunderclan to force them out of our lands... Riverclan, Windclan and Shadowclan against Tigerstar and his Warriors... We thought we would win... We were wrong.... I don't know how but Tigerstar recruited more fighters... Cats I never saw before... They had strange collars around their necks...."

"Kittypets ?" Firestar asked with a raise-brow : the domestic cats he knew were all lazy and fat. Not really fit for fight or hunt. Then again he had lived as a kittypet before joining Thunderclan Moons ago. However, Mistyfoot shook her head in response "No their collars were filled with Fangs.... Cats' and Dogs' ! It was terrifying !"

At this, the young Leader couldn't help but shivering in fear at the description of the collars : are those cats willing to kill their own and wearing their fangs as trophies ? It seems so... Shaking his dead to get rid of those thoughts, he gestured to the Riverclan Cat to continue " We fought those strangers but we were defeated... They were too many of them... Many Cats died that day..."

Firestar's heart were filled with sorrow and couldn't help himself as he asked in a weak tone "Who died ?" Mistyfoot seemed heart-broken " My brother Stonepelt was one of them.... And Windclan lost a young apprentice... Gorsepaw was his name... he was killed by Tigerstar himself..."

A deep growl echoed from Firestar's throat as he heard those words : he knew Gorsepaw, the young cat he carried back when he was a small kit, had died but he didn't know how... until now. "I'm sorry for your brother Mistyfoot... He was a noble Warrior..." "Thank you Firestar..." the blue furred molly whispered in a small voice as she gazed up at the young Leader with appreciation.

The fiery pelted Leader nodded back at her respectfully before adding " What happened after your 'defeat' ?" Internally, he wanted to slap his face himself for asking this but he HAD to know. "The Medicine Cats were really busy treating the injured... A week after the fight, we were discussing about Tigerstar when Onewhisker appear... He was running like crazy... And we soon understood why..."

Mistyfoot paused for a second and Firestar noticed how much she was shivering... then he caught her scent : fear. "We was pursued by Dogs... But they were HUGE ! Nothing like what Two-Legs' pets.... I never saw fangs THAT big !" The fire colored tom was beginning to worry " We had no choice but to flee ! They were far too strong to be attacked by front but Crookedstar managed to lure them toward the gorge..."

A lump formed in her throat as she stopped, before saying in a weak tone "He jumped into the rapids and some Dogs fell with him... He died as a Warrior..." Forgetting she was from another Clan, Firestar gently licked the top of her head whispering "Again I'm sorry..." A soft purr was heard as Mistyfoot looked up with a grateful smile.

"After Leopardstar became Leader , Onewhisker told us about how he found the Dogs... He had found Darkstripe with a rabbit in his jaws... behind him were some other dead rabbits... Onewhisker was about to confront him when the Dogs appeared... Darkstripe disappeared as fast as he could and it seem the Dogs didn't saw

him... because they went straight to..."

"I see..." Firestar mumbled with contained anger : he always hated Darkstripe and now he had another reason to add in the list. It seems Darkstripe was creating a trail from The Dogs Lair to Windclan territory... Darkstripe was far too stupid to make a plan so demoniac .... Maybe he was doing it for Tigerstar ?

"We were desperate.... We needed help but who would help us ? The kittypets were out of the Question... One of the rogues Shadowclan recruited , Boulder, told us about those cats Tigerstar allied with... Bloodclan... a clan willing to kill for pleasure..."

Those words sent chills down Firestar's chin " But then he gave us hope ! He explained that one day, he met a rogue who told him about a group of cats leaving far in the North... From what he was told, they were big and strong... We thought we could ask them for help..."

If they were willing to ask complete strangers to help them then... the situation back there must be terrible. "I volunteered to go along with Onewhisker.... It was only the two of us..." Firestar's heart was filled with excitement at the idea of seeing the Windclan Cat again after so long ! "Do you know where is he ?" To his disappointment, she shook her head clearly meaning 'no' "He went out hunting for us as I was too tired to do so..." she seemed ashamed for this.

But then she quickly regained her composure to ask "So... how did you became Skyclan Leader ?" "Dovestar chose me after Hawkfeather stepped down... I still don't know why though..." he hated lying but he couldn't tell her why the former Leader of Skyclan would chose HIM of all cats. "You seem happier here..." she remarked with a smile and he nodded at her "Yes life here is peaceful and I have everything I wanted : good friends, a loving mate.... And no Tigerstar to deal with !"

Mistyfoot looked envious but she hided it with a smile " I'm happy for you but.... Will you help us ? Please we really need you..." Her plea caught him by surprise : he never thought someone would beg him for help. He wanted to decline saying he had a Clan to take care of but seeing the desperation in her blue eyes... He sighed

deeply before responding "I will discussing this with the Clan... If they want to help then we will ! If not..." he stopped at this sentence with a frown.

"I understand...." Mistyfoot whispered before Kestrelfeather reappeared " I think I let you two long enough ! She needs to rest Firestar... You can come back later !" The fiery pelted tom nodded in agreement and slowly got up before making his way to the exit but not before glancing back at the blue furred molly and saying " After you are fully healed, we will discuss !"

Mistyfoot nodded in acceptance and her blue eyes watched him leave the den , leaving her with the strange brown molly that was their Medicine cat. Firestar, while making his way outside, was thinking about what he just learned : Tigerstar was becoming more and more dangerous as time passed... At this rate, nothing would stop him from his madness. *"Starclan ! Please help going through this ! Tell me what should I do ?"* He said to himself as he looked at the sky. Despise being far away from the Clans Territory , his past will always follow him like his shadow...

(To be continued...)

What do you think should happen next ? Tell me what Firestar's choice should be !

Chapter 17 : Hard Decision

"So what do you plan to do ?" Graystripe asked his longtime friend with a raise-brow as he and Firestar were sharing a piece of prey together. The gray tom just came back from his training session with his apprentice Foxpaw and the young Leader pulled his friend aside so they could talk in private. When they were out of earshot, Firestar revealed to his best friend what Addereye's patrol discovered earlier in the day.

Graystripe had been shocked to hear that MISTYFOOT of all Cats was all the way out here , far from the Clans Territory and was horrified when Firestar told him what the blue-gray molly revealed to him when the two of them were alone in Kestrelfeather's den.

"To be honest I don't know... I mean as much as I am concerned about our friends back there, its not really my problem anymore..." The fiery pelted Leader responded uneasily and his comrade nodded in response " I know its not but... It doesn't feel right for us to just leave them suffer like this...."

Deep down, Firestar was feeling the same : he really wanted to help but why should he ? After all, the Clans always looked at him with disdain because of his 'heritage' except a few minority such as Mistyfoot ,Onewhisker or Tallstar. Here in Skyclan, he was respected and loved and soon he would have a family to take care of.

" I know.... Believe me I know..." Firestar whispered as he sighed deeply. Graystripe looked at his longtime comrade with compassion as he shared exactly the same thought. "What do you plan to say to the Clan about.... Well....this ?" "I don't know.... But I think I should tell them now.... It will some time before Mistyfoot will be fully healed..."

"Alright then.... Good luck with that..." The gray tom said the last part with a playful grin but it quickly disappeared when Firestar

cuffed his head with his paw. Grumbling something which sounded like 'grumpy leader', Graystripe padded away before the fiery pelted tom could cuff him again.

Rolling his emerald eyes at his friend's antics, Firestar climbed on top of Rock-pile before taking a deep breath. Then he opened his mouth to let out the familiar words everyone known ***"Let's all cats old enough to catch their own prey join here beneath the Rock-pile for a Clan meeting !"*** As he finished the call, Skyclan Cats appeared from all around the camp before sitting before him, forming a half-circle around the Rock-Pile.

Firestar patiently watched as the Clan gathered around him : his daughter Goldenpaw was sitting beside Sootpaw while looking up at him with her usual cute little face. His apprentice Featherpaw was near her comrade Whitepaw , Russetpelt's apprentice, while her brother Stormpaw had his body pressed against Nightpaw's fur who had a look of content on her face.

His nephew Cloudtail was sitting beside his mate Brightheart and Firestar could see her belly becoming bigger and bigger. *"The kits will be born soon"* He remarked silently to himself before his green eyes landed on someone he loved with all his heart : Creampelt.

The large cream furred molly was sitting beside her mother Sandpelt along with Firestar's own mothers , Brownleaf and Russetpelt. Creampelt's belly was also becoming larger and Firestar's heart melted at the prospect to have kits of his own. Sure he had Goldenpaw and he loved the pale yellow furred she-apprentice but she was not his by blood.

Creampelt looked up at her mate with nothing but pure love and Firestar smiled at her fondly before looking back at the rest of the Clan who were now all before him. "Skyclan ! I called you here so I could hear your opinion about an important matter !" The Cats of Skyclan listened patiently as their Leader spoke " This morning, Addereye's patrol came across a she-cat sleeping in our territory ! Some of you must have seen her earlier..."

When some members of the Clan nodded, he resumed " This she-cat is Mistyfoot a Riverclan Warrior..." he instantly regretted saying this

small detail as the Clan started snarling and hissing in fury. They may have forgiven the former Thunderclanners but they still hold a grudge against the Clans.

Firestar sighed deeply before lifting his tail to demand silence and the Skyclan Cats reluctantly followed his silent order "I know many of you are angry.... But this she-cat was ill and needed help ! Kestrelfeather is taking care of her until she recover..." The Clan seemed to calm down a bit when they heard about the stranger being ill. They might have strong grudge but that didn't made them heartless.

" Why is she here ?" Ambershine asked from her seat near her den-mate Lynxclaw who looked just as confused as her. "She should be in her own territory !" Addereye snarled in anger and some of his Clan-mates nodded in agreement. "Maybe she was banished too ?" Brightheart inquired loudly as she looked at her Leader.

Firestar shook his head before saying "No... She is here for another reason..." "What is it then ?" Weaselpelt asked with a hint of curiosity despise her attempt to hide it. When he saw that the whole Clan was watching him, the fiery pelted tom took a deep breath before responding in a neutral tone "I talked to her a moment ago and what I discovered isn't good..."

Then he calmed explained in detail what Mistyfoot revealed to him : how Tigerstar lied to the Clans by saying he, Graystripe, Cloudtail and Brightheart were dead during the Rogues attack ; how the treacherous Thunderclan Leader had chase out Riverclan from their territory after a fire... He told them everything the blue gray molly had revealed him.

When Firestar finished talking, the whole Clan was silent but we could see the same expressions every-cats had on their faces : Shock, horror, disgust,... The fire pelted tom shared the same thought that his Clan-mates' but unlike them, he had another feeling which consumed his heart : anger.

He despised Tigerstar since the moment Ravenpaw told him about his treachery back when he was still an apprentice of Thunderclan and ,as he grew up, a strong animosity was formed between him

and the evil large brown tabby tom. It didn't help when the say tabby tried to kill him many times !

" I knew Tigerstar was evil but I never thought he would go THIS far ! He had no right to chase a Clan from their territory !" Cloudtail snarled in anger , his bristled white long made him look bigger. " Starclan must be angry at him !" Brightheart shouted in the same tone, agreeing with her mate.

" Why would he do that ? What would he gain ?" Mistfur inquired loudly from her seat. Croweye , her mate, then said those words " Maybe he want to rule them all !" Firestar looked at the black tom "It must be the reason yes... Tigerstar is ambitious ...too much in fact... I wouldn't be surprised if that the case..."

"What do you plan to do Firestar ? Do we have to go there and help ? Or we stay here and leave them take care of themselves ?" Nightfur, the Clan Deputy, asked his Leader from his seat beneath the Rock-pile.

"Is the reason why I called this meeting actually... Before announcing my decision to Mistyfoot , I wanted to ask your opinion about this !" was the response of the fire pelted tom. "I think we should help ! No one deserve to suffer like this !" Brightheart inquired as she looked at everyone with her blue eyes.

"Why should we ? No offense but we can't just head there and fight ! Some of us might get injured or worse killed ! I think we should stay here !" Foxclaw remarked from his seat near Addereye who seemed to agree with his Clan-mate's words.

The rest of the Clan was a bit mixed about this : some of them wanted to go and help but they were some who really wanted to avoid a war. Firestar , after a few moment, decided to step in "You don't have to answer now... We have all the time to think about this matter... And when Mistyfoot will be back on her paws... We will give her our decision !"

The Skyclan Cats nodded in agreement and the young Leader dismissed them. As his Clan-mates departed, he jumped off Rock-pile before approaching his mate who licked the top of his head

lovingly. In response, he purred as he gently nuzzled her chin which earned a long purr of content coming from the large molly.

"Are you alright love ?~" Creampelt asked him in concern as she saw the look on his face : uneasiness. The fiery pelted tom sighed deeply before answering " I don't know... I want to help but... Why should I ? I have a new home, a family and a Clan to take care of... " the large cream furred molly stopped him by putting a paw on his mouth to shut him up " Firestar... I understand what you feel... I always admired your kindness and how you would do anything to help others... Your heart is your biggest strength..."

His mate's words warmed him as he nuzzled her cheek and she purred in delight as he whispered "Thank you Creampelt... I love you" "I love you too stupid fur-ball~" she whispered warmly as she licked his face longly before walking away toward the Nursery. Firestar watched her go before looking over at his apprentice , Featherpaw who was sharing tongues with her friend (and possible mate) Whitepaw.

"Featherpaw !" At the call of her name, the silver she-apprentice trotted toward him with a questioning look on her face "Yes Firestar ?" " I want you and another apprentice to go hunt for the Elders and the Queens in the Nursery !" Firestar inquired calmly and she nodded eagerly before running toward Whitepaw. *"Why am I not surprised ?"* he thought to himself with a chuckle as he watched the two friends leaving the gorge.

Then he spotted his adoptive daughter Goldenpaw who was feasting on a mouse. Smiling, he approached her : he wanted to have some time with the apprentice he grew fond of. The second Goldenpaw saw him she instantly jumped back on her paws before rushing toward her father figure who looked at her with a chuckle.

Then she pressed her body against his legs purring. She grew a lot since the first time he met her and a pang of sadness filled his heart : soon Goldenpaw would be independent and will receive her Warrior Name. His sad thoughts were interrupted by the voice of his adoptive daughter " Daddy ! Are you okay ?" His green eyes looked down to lock into Goldenpaw's blue eyes who were gazing up at him in concern.

"I'm alright Goldenpaw don't worry ! Do you want to go with me ?" Firestar asked her with a soft smile. "Hunting , training session or patrol ?" she asked him with a hint of disappointment which he easily caught "What about some father-daughter time ?" he asked with a payful wink which earned a wide smile from the she-apprentice who nodded eagerly.

Chuckling, he led her away from the gorge after telling his Deputy he would be in charge until his return. When the two were out of sight, the fire pelted tom pounced on the apprentice who squealed when he started tickling her. "Daddy ! Please stooooooop !" she managed to say between laughs.

Firestar then jumped away and in response, she chased after him. When she was close enough, she pounced on him and the two rolled in the grasses with Goldenpaw tugging his left ear between her jaws just like when she was a small kit. "Daddy ?" "Yes ?" "I love you" With a fond smile, he responded in a fatherly tone "I love you too daughter".

The two of them cuddled each other for a long time and when they came back to camp, the night was starting to come. Firestar ruffled the top of his daughter's head one last time (which elicited a whine from say daughter) before dismissing her. He had a lot of fun but now ,all he wanted was to rest. But he needed to do something first.

First, he went toward Kestrelfeather's den and the moment he putted his head inside, he was greeted by his aunt "What can I do for you dear nephew ?～" she asked him gently as the two pressed their heads against each other. "I'm just making sure Mistyfoot is alright..." "She is don't worry ! She just fell asleep however..." "I see... then I won't bother you... Good night" he said as he licked his aunt's cheek before leaving the den to approach the nursery.

He looked inside and saw the Queens : all of them were sleeping. His green eyes landed on Creampelt and with a smile, he turned around to go to his own den. However before entering it, he stopped and gazed up at the sky and particularly at the stars *"Oh Starclan help me make the good decision"* he prayed silently before entering the cave where he curled around himself as the fiery pelted Leader laid on his nest. Then he closed his eyes and fell asleep still

wondering what should he do about Tigerstar and his madness.

(To be continued...)

PLEASE HELP !

To my good readers or everyone who enjoy this story so far,

I humbly ask what do you think should happen after Mistyfoot recover ?

First off all, what would be Firestar's decision ? :

- Skyclan refuses to help the Clans and let them suffer

- Skyclan accepts to help the Clans

If Firestar and his Clan accepted to help then what should happen next ? (I ask this because I'm curious about your opinion) :

-Firestar talk with the Leaders about how to get rid of Tigerstar and Bloodclan (hello future fights ^^)

-Firestar convinced Tallstar, Nightstar and Leopardstar to leave the Forest to look for another territory

I look forward to see what will you vote for ! Take all the time you need to make your decision ! Thank you for reading and supporting *'SKYCLAN'S FIRE'*! I hope I will satisfy you more in the future ^^

Chapter 18 : Decision

From what I saw some people had voted for 'SKYCLAN ACCEPTED TO HELP THE CLANS' So here is the chapter associated with it ! However for the rest I let you more time to think ! Chose wisely warriors and enjoy the story ! Again thank you for supporting 'SKYCLAN'S FIRE' !

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Firestar let out a soft yawn as he stepped out of his den and he purred when he felt the warm feeling of the sun against his flame furred pelt. It had been a few days since Mistyfoot, a Riverclan Warrior, was found and she looked better than when they found her. She was no longer skinny and her strength came back after days of starvation.

During all this time, the young Leader thought about Tigerstar and the things he was doing back in the Forest territories. The treacherous dark brown tom was growing more and more dangerous and at this rate, Windclan, Shadowclan and Riverclan would be no more.

After hours of internal debates, the fire pelted tom decided he WOULD help the Clans but he was unsure about what HIS Clan would think about this. Shaking his head, he trotted toward the pile of fresh-kill before picking up a plump vole and trotting toward the nursery where his beloved mate, Creampelt, resided.

She was due to any day now and he was excited at the thought of being a father. Sure he had some experience because he helped to take care of his adoptive daughter Goldenpaw but ,deep down, he was still a bit scared to not be a good father.

He cautiously looked inside the cave and his green eyes instantly landed on the large cream-furred molly he loved so much. Speaking

of the molly, she was currently sleeping and her belly was getting bigger as time passed. With a soft purr, he approached her and calmly putted the rodent down before nuzzling her face lovingly. Creampelt groaned in displeasure and opened her eyes to see who was waking her so she could give him or her a piece of her mind.

But then, she purred with affection when she realized it was her mate who woke her up and returned the gesture before licking his face. "Good morning love~" she purred fondly as her beautiful sky blue eyes "Good morning beautiful... Here some prey for you..." the young Leader said softy as he used his nose to push the rodent toward her.

"Awww thank you dear ! I was starving !~" Creampelt purred in thanks before wolfing down the vole under the amused eyes of her mate who grinned maliciously as he remarked teasingly "If you keep eating like that, there would be no more preys on our territory..." the large cream-furred molly interrupted her meal to send him a playful glare which caused him to look away innocently.

"If that happen dear... Then I would gladly eat you first~" Creampelt retorted back in the same tone while eying him with a grin as she licked her lips with a fake look of hunger. "Why me ? Graystripe is far bigger than me !" Firestar said back with a devious grin and the two of them laughed.

At the same time, Graystripe was eating a rabbit with Weaselpelt when he suddenly sneezed. The brown and white molly looked at him with a frown "Are you alright ?" "Yes someone must be talking about me behind my back..." the dark gray tom said back dismissively before resuming his meal as if nothing happened. Weaselpelt eyed him suspiciously for a moment but then shrugged as she resumed her own feast.

"So... what do you plan to tell Mistyfoot today ?" Creampelt asked her mate after the two stopped laughing. Firestar sighed deeply and mentally prepared himself for the shouts he would SURELY receive from the one he love more than anything. "I will tell her I will help the Clans..." He froze and closed his eyes waiting for an angry retort from his mate but strangely, it never came. He opened his eyes and saw that she was looking at him with a smile.

"I knew you would say that... You always had a good heart... That what I love in you~" she explained with a fond smile. Firestar sighed in relief before saying teasingly "Is that the only reason you love me ? I thought it was because of my charm...." "Sure Firestar keep telling yourself that~" Creampelt retorted back calmly but with a smirk and this caused the two to laugh in pure amusement.

"Well I think I should go so Mistyfoot now... See you later sunshine !" The young Leader said to his mate after nuzzling his chin. Creampelt purred with affection as she gently licked her face in response, then she returned at her meal as her mate stepped out of the nursery. Firestar walked straight toward the Medicine Cat's Den but before he could enter it, he was stopped by his long-time friend Graystripe.

"Hey Firestar ! Do you mind if me and my kits have some time for ourselves ?" the dark gray tom asked him with a look of hope on his face "Do you really have to ask me this Graystripe ? Can't you take your own decision ?" the flame pelted tom asked back with a mischievous grin which earned a groan of annoyance from the one he considered as a brother.

"Alright you won thank you for your time and why are you going there ?" Firestar shook his head before answering his best friend's question " I just wanted to talk with Mistyfoot and see how she was..." "Alright say hello for me !" The dark gray tom inquired as he trotted away, leaving an amused young Leader behind. Chuckling at his friend's antics, the fire pelted tom entered the den and instantly caught the sight of the blue-gray Riverclan Cat talking with his aunt Kestrelfeather.

The pale brown Medicine Cat heard some paw-steps approaching and turned her head to see her beloved nephew coming "Firestar ! What we do for you ?~" she asked him in her usual calm and gentle tone. Mistyfoot looked at the newcomer with a smile. During her time in Skyclan she learned that Firestar was a Clan born and not a punt kittypet like everyone believed back in the forest.

She also got to meet some of Cats of the Clan and befriended most of them. She particularly got along with Creampelt, Brightheart and Weaselpelt. But she was also liked by the Elders for unknown

reasons. Featherpaw and Stormpaw, Graystripe's kits took a liking to her as well and the same could be said to Goldenpaw.

She also got to learn about who Tigerstar really was , thanks to both Graystripe and Firestar and she was scandalized by those revelations. But what shocked her more was the fact she was Bluestar's daughter ! The young Leader had accidentally slipped out this information when he was talking about Oakheart's death and she was 'inquired' him to tell her how he knew this.

He had no choice but to tell her the truth. Mistyfoot had stood there shocked for a moment but eventually forgiven Bluestar for her hard decision. When he heard this, Firestar had been filled with relief as he knew Bluestar loved her kits and was saddened to not have been the one raising them.

Firestar smiled as he looked between his aunt and Riverclan friend "I wanted to talk with Mistyfoot..." The blue furred molly's eyes landed on him as she asked curiously "About what ?" He took a deep breath before saying in a calm tone "I decided to go with you and talk with the Clans !"

Mistyfoot's eyes widened comically at those words "Really ?!" "Yes ! But first I must ask the Clan if they want to come with me..." the young Leader remarked with a soft tone and the Riverclan Cat along with Kestrelfeather looked at him with sympathy. The Medicine Cat knew her nephew would want to help and she was proud of him for this reason but she didn't know what the Clan would say about their Leader leaving.

"The sooner you talk with them the better..." Kestrelfeather inquired her nephew wisely and he nodded his head at her in agreement "I will wait for the patrols to return... Then I will call the Clan..." the two Mollies nodded in agreement but then someone's voice caught their attention "Firestar !"

The flame pelted tom turned his head and saw his deputy Nightfur standing there "Nightfur ! What's going on ?" the black tabby tom slowly approached his Leader, greeted the mollies before saying in a neutral tone " Cloudtail and his patrol just returned... They were attacked by a badger... " "Again ? Its the fifth time this week !"

Kestrelfeather said in frustration as she stormed out of her den.

Firestar sighed deeply before looking back at his deputy "Did they chased it away ?" "They did ! Thanks Starclan... but Mistfur is persuaded that it would come back..." The young Leader nodded in head before saying in a neutral tone " I see.... Thank you Nightfur you can go now..." The black tabby bowed in front of his Leader before trotting away.

Mistyfoot then stepped closer before saying "Thank you... for helping us..." Firestar glanced at her before responding "Its the right thing to do..." It didn't say more and he slowly made his way out of the Medicine Cat's Den. He then looked around and saw that the whole Clan was there and with a deep breath he jumped on Rock-pile ***"Let's all Cats old enough to catch their own prey join here beneath the Rock-pile for a Clan meeting !"*** he called out the rest of the Clan who, had the sight of him on the Rock, approached their Leader, wondering what would he want.

As his Clan gathered around him, the young Leader's emerald green eyes watched everyone with calm and confidence (like a Leader should) : as usual, Featherpaw was sitting near Whitepaw while her brother was sitting near Nightpaw. Goldenpaw, his adoptive daughter, was with (no surprise there) Sootpaw.

Cloudtail, the white warrior, was pressed against Brightheart's side, her belly filled with their kits. Creampelt, his loving mate, ws sitting with the other Queens Lynxclaw and Ambershine and she was gazing at her mate with nothing but pure love which warmed his heart. Creampelt's mother, Sandpelt was sitting alongside Firestar's mothers Brownleaf and Russetpelt.

Graystripe was sitting near Weaselpelt and the two seemed quite close. Firestar internally grinned because he now had a good reason to tease his longtime friend. But then he looked back at his Clan as he spoke those words "Cats of Skyclan ! I summoned you because its time we discuss a serious matter ! Mistyfoot come here ..." he inquired her calmly.

The blue furred molly became nervous but stepped forward before climbing the Rock-pile to sit beside the young Leader "As you all

know Mistyfoot came to us for help and its time we reveal our decision..." he began to say before pausing. His green eyes scanned the cats gathered around him and he was about to say more when Mistfur, a young gray and white molly with blue eyes, stepped forward " I don't know about my clan-mates but I will help you in anyway I can !"

Firestar blinked in surprise : he didn't expected this. He was sure he would told them his own decision to go back in the Forest and help but it seems fate had different plans... "I will go as well ! We are Skyclan ! We are not Cold-hearted !" Addereye inquired as he gazed at his Leader with determination. One by one , more and more Cats shouted their support and Mistyfoot seemed overjoyed.

"So everyone is agree ?" Firestar asked his Clan who all nodded their heads. Then he looked back at the Riverclan Cat with a green fire in his eyes "Mistyfoot... You can consider Skyclan as your ally... We will help you to the end !" Yowls and cheers could be heard from the whole Clan before Firestar yelled for silence.

"However, we won't let the Camp abandoned... Some of us have to stay and protect the Elders and Queens..."Whispers of agreement ran through the crowd. "We will leave tomorrow ! The sooner we go the sooner we can come back... I will take with me Graystripe, Cloudtail, Mistfur, Weaselpelt, Croweye , Foxclaw and Nightfur ! The rest will stay here !" "What about us ?" Goldenpaw asked her father as she gazed up at him.

He looked at her neutrally but also with a frown "I only need Warriors for this... You and the other apprentices are not ready yet..." "Its not fair !" Stormpaw inquired as he jumped on his paws. "You should let them come Firestar ! Their disappointment would make them intrepid..." Nightfur remarked as he looked at his Leader with a calm expression on his face.

"Fine but I won't take all the apprentices !" Firestar sighed after a moment of silence but then his green eyes landed on the apprentices as he scanned them " I will take Sootpaw, Foxpaw and Darkpaw !" Goldenpaw whined in disappointment but she stopped when she saw the angry look she was receiving from her mother. Featherpaw and Stormpaw were equally as disappointed but their

comrades (*cough* future lovers *cough*) comforted them. Kestrelfeather stepped forward before saying in a calm tone " I will come as well ! You will need a Medicine Cat for this journey !" Firestar nodded at her before looking at everyone " Now rest, and gather your strength ! Tomorrow a long journey is waiting for us ! Clan dismissed !"

The Cats dispersed at those words. Firestar jumped off the Rock-pile and was about to return to his den when he was instantly stopped by his daughter Goldenpaw "Why didn't you let me come ?" she asked him in a sad tone. With a sigh, he lowered his head down before responding "Because I have a bigger task for you..." Those words seemed to caught her interest because she looked up at him with wonder "What is it ?" "I need you to protect your mother... Don't forget she is carrying your siblings and she would need you more than ever..."

Goldenpaw looked deep in thought for a moment but then smiled "I won't disappoint you Daddy..." she said with confidence and he smiled at her whispering "I know you won't.." the two nuzzled each other before going on their way. Sadly, he didn't went far because Creampelt approached him. His heart broken when he saw the sadness in her usual warm eyes.

He pressed his head under her chin and he could hear her soft purr "Can you stay with me tonight ?" she asked him with a soft tone and he nodded at her with a soft smile. He was sad to leave his mate behind but he couldn't let her come. She was pregnant after all and he would NEVER risk her's or their kits' life. The rest of the day went on and the Cats Firestar had chosen for the journey were enjoying their last days among their comrades.

When the night came, Firestar, as promised, as decided to sleep in the nursery with the she-cat he loved more than his Clan...more than honor...more than Life itself.

(To be continued...)

PLEASE HELP 2

I'm sorry to bother you again with this but I really need your help ! Please I humbly ask you to pick up one of those options and to answer trustworthy :

Firestar and some cats of Skyclan decided to go the Forest territories and Help Windclan, Riverclan and Shadowclan. Good but what should happen next ? Good question and here some possibilities :

- Firestar tried to convince his fellow Leaders to leave the Forest to find another territory.

- Firestar and his group worked with the other Clans to stop Tigerstar's ambition.

- Firestar chose to talk with Bloodclan Leader to try to find an alternative.

- The Skyclan Cats are forced to return home because the Clans refused their help.

Here the possibilities... Chose the one you want !

Oh and I want to ask you another thing : How many kits Firestar and Creampelt should have ? And their genders ? Do you want to still see Squirrelflight and Leafpool or no ?

Again take the time you need to take your choice and thank you for following 'SKYCLAN'S FIRE'

Chapter 19 : Departure and Reunion

Firestar woke up the next morning with a soft yawn as he slowly got up, trying his best to not wake the she-cat sleeping peacefully at his side. His green eyes looked at the large cream furred molly with nothing but pure love and he felt a pang of sadness at the mere idea of being separate from her. But he had to...

With a sigh, he gently lowered his head down to lick the top of her head before stepping out of the nursery as quietly as he could. The moment he stepped out, he couldn't retain a purr of content as the sunlight clashed against his flame colored pelt, warming him up. Then he looked at the camp and saw that almost everyone was up and among them, the cats he chose to come with him for the long journey to the Forest Territories.

Firestar slowly approached them as they were currently eating some prey from the fresh kill pile. Graystripe , who saw him coming, mewled a greeting as the dark gray tom was sharing a rabbit with Foxclaw "Good morning Firestar ! Are you ready to leave ?" he asked his leader and longtime friend with hesitation.

The bright-flame colored tom sighed deeply and glanced back at the nursery before looking back at his friend and answering "We will leave after everyone is awake..." he tried to avoid Graystripe's question as best as he could but it seems luck wasn't with him "No wanting to leave your mate huh ?" the dark gray tom teased with a grin.

Firestar glared back at him before smirking deviously as he said back "A bit hypocritical coming from you fur-ball don't you think ? ~" Graystripe hissed at him back but didn't answer as he looked away. Knowing that he won, the young Leader triumphantly walked toward the fresh kill pile where he picked up a plump vole to himself.

But then he saw a big rabbit and he picked it up before making his way back to the nursery without making a sound. He peeked his head inside and thankfully, all Queens were still sleeping peacefully and , as quietly as he could, he made his way toward his mate before gently lowering the rabbit down just before her face.

It was at this moment that he noticed the figure sleeping next to Brightheart and it wasn't difficult to figure out who it was : no one had such long white fur except his nephew and former apprentice Cloudtail. The young Warrior must have chosen to sleep with his mate last night just like he did.

With one last look of love, Firestar picked up his vole before walking away toward Graystripe who gave him a look of pure amusement which he ignored as he attacked his breakfast. As he enjoyed his piece of prey, some members of the Clan started to appear from the caves (Except the Elders of course).

Among them, were the apprentices and some of them , particularly , the ones chosen to come approached the group after picking up their soon-to-be-meal. Firestar saw that among them were none other than Stormpaw, his sister Featherpaw and Goldenpaw.

The trio seemed a bit sad for not being able to come but they understood perfectly why. The young Leader, Graystripe and Creampelt made sure of it.

They might UNDERSTAND but it didn't mean that they LIKED it.

The youngest apprentices of the Clan were excited at the prospect of journeying and felt a bit left-apart when Firestar refused to let them come. Their friends (and 'soon-to-be-lovers') were feeling sad for them as they too were disappointed to not be able to come. Sootpaw , who was among the chosen apprentice along with Darkpaw and Foxpaw, was a bit sad to not have them with him for this journey.

Goldenpaw approached her adoptive father before burying her face into his chest, purring. With a smile, he returned the affection but nuzzling the top of her head. They stood like this for a minute before Goldenpaw stepped back to look at him with sadness "Daddy

do you really have to leave ?" Firestar looked back at her with the same look of sadness as he responded "I have too... I promised...But I will be back and never again I will leave you and your mother..." His words seemed to please her because she pressed her head against his just like when she was a kit.

Then two other figures appeared and Firestar purred when he saw it was none other that his mothers Russetpelt and Brownleaf. The two mollies purred lovingly as they enveloped him into a hug which he gladly returned. "I want hugs too !" Goldenpaw complained cutely as she tried to include herself in the cuddle moment (much to their amusement)

"Good morning son~! Did you slept well ?~" Russetpelt asked him with pure maternal love. " I did but...." he trailed off as he looked at the ground , sadly. "You don't want to leave, am I right ?" Brownleaf asked gently as she had a look of understanding in her eyes.

" Can you blame me ? My kits will be born soon and I won't be able to see them ! Let alone support my own mate..." Firestar responded with a hint of sorrow. "I know son but We will be there to help and make sure that Creampelt would be in good care~" Russetpelt inquired her son with warmth. Her mate Brownleaf nodded at her in agreement as her eyes were filled with determination.

"I will be there too ! No one will touch my baby siblings !" Goldenpaw said with firmness as she stepped forward. His soon-to-be-born kits would have a really protective older sister. Firestar looked at his adoptive daughter proudly as he purred in content. Then he saw Nightfur approaching them "Goldenpaw take some preys and take them to the Elders... They will be up soon and really hungry~" he said the last part with hint of amusement.

Goldenpaw snickered but she nodded at her father before trotting away to the fresh kill pile. Russetpelt and Brownleaf cuddled him one more time before walking away leaving their son alone with the Clan Deputy. "Firestar ! Are we ready to go ?" Nightfur asked his Leader after bowing in respect. "We are but first we should wait for everyone to be there before leaving !"

The black tabby nodded in understanding before asking "Who will

be in charge of the Camp in our absence ?" "Addereye..." Firestar responded after a moment of silence. The tortoiseshell tom with green eyes was noble and wise and so the best choice. Nightfur looked at his Leader with agreement as he turned around before walking away.

Firestar then finished what remained of his vole before glancing over at Graystripe who had just dismissed his kits " How are you feeling ?" he asked his longtime friend with uneasiness "I don't know.... I should be happy to go back but..." "I know... " The bright-flame colored tom whispered back at the two of them gazed down at the ground with sadness.

The two of them had lived among the Clans for a long time before being forced to leave thanks to the treacherous Tigerstar. For some time, they lived as rogues before escorting Creampelt and Goldenpaw (Goldenkit back then) all the way to Skyclan who allowed them to join.

In fact, the former Thunderclanners were much happier here than back in Thunderclan. After all, in the Forest Territories, Firestar was seen as nothing more than a puny kittypet while Graystripe was seen as a traitor for both Thunderclan and Riverclan because of his forbidden relationship with Crookedstar's daughter, Silverstream.

The silence reigned between the two friends for a moment but then Graystripe to break it by saying with a grin " You know... I'm thinking about the look on everyone's face when we come back..." Firestar grinned back at him with the same look of amusement in his emerald green eyes. From what Mistyfoot said, the Four Clans thought that he, Graystripe, Brightheart and Cloudtail were dead... It would understandable if they became shocked by their 're-apparition'.

But then a new voice echoed... a voice as sweet as honey... a voice Firestar cherished dearly "Hello guys~" He turned his head to see the smiling face of Creampelt and behind her were Cloudtail and Brigtheart who were cuddling each other. The large cream furred molly approached her mate before lovingly licking his face, purring with affection.

"Hello sunshine~"Firestar purred back as he nuzzled her neck which caused her purr to intensified. "Thank you for the rabbit by the way~" she thanked him as her sky blue eyes gazed down at him with nothing but pure love. "Anything for you~" The bright-flame pelted tom responded as his green eyes looked at her.

"You know there is cave for that..." Graystripe said playfully to the two but flinched in fear when Creampelt and Firestar sent him an evil glare. If a look could kill, then the dark gray tom knew he would be. "Alright alright I understand ! I will leave you be !" Graystripe said quickly with a grin as he trotted without waiting for their answers.

"Sometimes I wonder why I became friend with this fur-ball..." Firestar sighed as he shook his head in fake exasperation. Creampelt shrugged as she pinned him before licking his face repeatedly for a few minutes. "Firestar I... Oh sorry I'm clearly interrupting something I will let you two be then~" Mistyfoot said as she appeared from the Medicine Cat's Den.

The last part was said with a mischievous look in her blue eyes and the two lovebirds couldn't help but blushing madly. Firestar then cleared his throat before looking back at a grinning blue-furred molly "Right... So you wanted to say something..." he said to break the awkward moment.

Mistyfoot smirked for a second but then became serious again " I was wondering when we will go..." "You are not the first one to ask me this...Anyway ! We will leave when everyone will be awake..." The blue she-cat nodded in understanding before looking at Creampelt with a smile which the large cream pelted molly returned.

The two of them became good friends since Mistyfoot first came here and Firestar was happy for the two. The Riverclan Warrior also befriend Weaselpelt, some of the Queens and the Elders. Heck even the apprentices liked her. As the two mollies talked, Firestar saw that the rest of the Clan was stepping out of the caves. Then he saw his aunt Kestrelfeather approaching him and he purred a greeting which she returned by licking the top of his head affectionately. "It is time !" she said gravely as she looked at with her usual stern face.

With a deep sigh, he nodded at her before jumping on the Rock-pile where he looked at everyone before calling out the familiar words well-known ***"Let's all Cats old enough to catch their own prey join here beneath the Rock-pile for a Clan meeting !"*** Hearing the call, Skyclan began to gather around their Leader and they knew why he called them. The group he chose to follow him stood there with determination but their eyes betrayed their true feelings : sadness.

The rest of the Clan had equal expression on their faces but they knew it was necessary. " Cats of Skyclan ! As you all know, it is time for some of us to leave and honor the promise we made to Mistyfoot... In our absence, Addereye will be in charge of the Clan and I trust him to take care of you !" The tortoiseshell tom bowed his head in respect as his leader.

" Don't worry Addereye you won't be alone ! Robinfeather will help you..." The young Leader inquired and the she-cat in question, at first shocked, nodded in understanding, accepting her Leader's decision. " I know some of you are not completely for our departure and I can't blame you for that... but we have to do what is right... Why ? Because we are ***SKYCLAN ! The noblest Clan to exist !***"

The last part was shouted out and yowls and cheers echoed from the gathered Cats around him. Then he lifted his tail to silence them before adding " Now it is time... We will try to come back as soon as possible..." The Clan began to mutter before Brightheart inquired loudly "May Starclan light your path !"

"May Starclan protect you !" "May Starclan return you to us !"

Skyclan's prays echoed in the gorge as the gathered Cats wished their Leader and Clan-mates a good journey. The closest ones embraced them for the last time until their return in who-know-when. "Please Firestar... Promise me you will be back..." Creampelt inquired her mate as she pressed her large body against his "I promise... Nothing would separate me from you～" She purred in response and watched in sadness when his mate pulled away from her.

He gave her a comforting look but his green eyes betrayed his sorrow at the mere idea of leaving them. But then he shook his

head and his green eyes were now filled with a burning fire as he called out loudly " Let's go !" The ones he chose : Cloudtail, Graystripe, Mistfur, Croweye, Weaselpelt, Foxclaw and Nightfur along with the apprentices Sootpaw, Darkpaw and Foxpaw and the medicine Cat Kestrelfeather (Mistyfoot was with them) followed him after a final goodbye to their loved ones who wished them good lucks as they watched them leaving with pure sorrow and sadness.

As the group departed, Creampelt was being comforted by her daughter Goldenpaw and her mother Sandpelt but her sky blue eyes were still following her mate's form as she whispered softy "Starclan... Please... Make sure they come back... make sure Firestar come back..." AT the same time in Starclan, three familiars she-cats looked down at the livings with sympathy and they said at the same time "We will~"

000000000000000000***(Time skip)***000000000000000000000000

Many days had passed since they left the Gorge and the group was approaching the Forest Territories. This time Mistyfoot was leading the group who were becoming more wearier of the unfamiliar place. However, Cloudtail , Graystripe and Firestar were uneasy because of the mere idea of seeing old faces again. The blue molly led them toward Four-Trees without passing near Ravenpaw's barn.

Firestar and Graystripe were a bit disappointed because they wanted to see their old friend again but they had to find Leopardstar , Blackstar and Tallstar. On the way, Mistyfoot explained to them that since Thunderclan took Riverclan's territory, her Clan had to take refuge in Windclan . Shadowclan, the biggest rival of Thunderclan, allied with them in hope their number would be enough to Defeat Tigerstar and his Clan. But it wasn't since the treacherous Thunderclan Leader allied himself with a Clan of Rogues. From what they heard the three Clans moved next to Four-Trees where the Clans gathered each full moon.

They passed through Windclan territory and a familiar smell caught their attention. A smell Firestar recognized instantly and his suspicions were right when a small brown tabby tom appeared from the grasses. He stopped in front of the group and when his eyes

landed on Firestar and Graystripe... Well they widened in pure shock "No it cannot be..." he muttered in denial as he looked at the two.

"Hey Onewhisker Its been a long time wasn't it ?" The bright-flame colored tom said to his friend with a soft smile. Onewhisker looked at him but then he smiled "Fireheart ! You are alive ! How can this be ?" the Windclan Warrior inquired as he stepped closer.

However, before Firestar could answer, Mistyfoot stepped forward to glare at the Winclan Warrior "Onewhisker ! How come you are here ?!"

Onewhisker glanced at her before answering "When I came back from the hunt I saw you weren't there anymore... So I thought you left ! That's why I came back but one I returned here, I asked everyone if they saw you but they responded 'no'..." Mistyfoot glared at him for a second before calming down as she looked back at Firestar.

The young Leader then cleared his throat to look at the brown Warrior "Its good to see you again my friend... I'm happy to see you again..." "I should be the one to say that ! We were told you were dead !" Onewhisker said back in a friendly expression as he looked toward a certain dark gray tom "You too Graystripe !"

Graystripe mewled a greeting before saying " Its good to see you again Onewhisker ! But I think we don't have the time for a friendly chat..." "Indeed we need to see Leopardstar, Nightstar and Tallstar !" Firestar said in agreement at his friend's words. "This way !" Onewhisker said as he led them toward Windclan's camp.

As they walked, the brown tabby couldn't retain himself as he asked curiously "So Fireheart where were you during all this time ?" The bright-flame pelted tom grinned at him before saying "The answer will come in due time... However, you must know that I'm not Fireheart anymore..." Onewhisker blinked in confusion before Firestar gestured to his forehead and the Winclan Warrior's eyes widened when he saw the faint shape of a star on his friend's head.

"You are a Leader ?!" he asked the fire pelted tom who nodded at

him. "Congratulations ! You sure still manage to surprise me even after all this time !" Onewhisker inquired with amusement as he punched Firestar's shoulder in a friendly manner. Soon they reached Windclan's camp, and the group passed through a tangle of gorse.

The second, they stepped in the camp, the Cats present looked at them , some with curiosity. Tallstar was there ,talking with Leopardstar and the two Leaders were looking at the newcomers with surprise. However, the surprise turned into shock when Firestar and Graystripe stepped forward. Around them, from Cats of Windclan and Riverclan, gasps could be heard.

"Fireheart ? Is that you ?" Tallstar asked him from his place after a moment of stunned silence as he harbored a shocked look on his aged face. "Long time no see Tallstar..." Firestar said with a smile as his emerald green eyes looked at the two Leaders before him.

(To be continued...)

Chapter 20 : Tallstar and Leopardstar

"Fireheart ? Is that you ?" Tallstar asked him from his place after a moment of stunned silence as he harbored a shocked look on his aged face. "Long time no see Tallstar..." Firestar said with a smile as his emerald green eyes looked at the two Leaders before him.

To say Leopardstar and Tallstar were surprised was understandable. Both of them were looking at him with nothing but pure shock written on their faces. After, they came to believe, thanks to Tigerstar, that him, Graystripe, his kits, Cloudtail and Brightheart were killed in the rogues attack moons ago. And who would question Tigerstar's says back then ?

"Fireheart... How is it possible ?" the black and white Windclan Leader began to say as he then spotted another familiar figure among the newcomers "Graystripe ?!" The gray tom stepped forward before bowing his head in respect "Tallstar... Leopardstar..."

Firestar almost couldn't retain himself to laugh at the expression on Leopardstar's face when she saw Graystripe (and himself). After all, she always held a grudge against him and the gray tom because of the death of one of her Clan-mates , Whiteclaw , moons ago.

The bright-flame colored tom internally grimaced at the reminder but managed to hide his thoughts as he then looked back at Tallstar , the noble Leader of Windclan. The black and white tom looked thiner than the last time he saw him... Even though Windclan Cats in general were seen as thinner than others.

"Firestar !" someone called from behind him and the call seemed to catch the attention of only himself but also the gathered Riverclan and Windclan Warriors. Firestar turned his head to see his nephew

Cloudtail approaching him. The Skyclan Leader was totally aware of the looks of astonishment and surprise he was receiving from most of the Cats present and , internally, he couldn't blame them.

"Yes Cloudtail ?" The Skyclan Leader asked the white long-furred warrior ,ignoring the others. "Where should we sleep from now ?" Cloudtail asked Firestar with a frown as eyed the camp. It was a good question. The camp was big enough to fit both Riverclan and Windclan but couldn't be able to add them.

However before he could respond, Firestar was interrupted by Tallstar's voice who echoed just behind him "There is some bushes not too far from here... Maybe you can go there..." The bright-flame colored tom bowed his head at his fellow Leader before looking over at his Deputy "Nightfur !"

Hearing his name, the black tabby tom approached his Leader "Yes Firestar ?" The Skyclan Leader glanced at Tallstar who just called over Deadfoot, his Deputy. The twisted legged-black tom bowed his head at his Leader before doing the same to Firestar who returned the gesture. Then he looked at Nightfur who was patiently waiting "Nightfur... Take some Warriors with you and follow Deadfoot... Graystripe, Cloudtail and Weaselpelt will stay here with me... We will join you later !"

Nightfur bowed to his Leader and called out the rest of the Skyclan Cats before they followed Deadfoot to their soon-to-be-sleep-place. "Fireheart... I mean Firestar..." Leopardstar corrected herself after a second of hesitation before resuming "We need to talk... now..." The bright-flame colored tom nodded his head at her and he followed the two other Leaders as they walked away from the crowd. But then Firestar stopped a second to glance at the cats he chose to remain with him : Graystripe was talking with Onewhisker who harbored a look of joy on his face while Cloudtail and Weaselpelt were discussing to each other before being approached by two Windclan apprentices that Firestar didn't know.

Smiling, the bright-flame colored tom went after Leopardstar and Tallstar who were waiting him under the Tallrock. When he reached them, Tallstar was the first one to talk "So... You are a Leader now huh ? Congratulations !" Firestar bowed his head at the

older tom in gratefulness "Indeed... Congratulations are in order... but tell us... How can you , Graystripe and Cloudtail be alive ?"

"Yes ! Tigerstar told us about the attack in your camp moons ago... and about Bluestar's death... My condolences by the way..." Tallstar inquired sadly as he looked at the fire pelted young tom before him "Thank you... And there WAS an attack but led by Tigerstar himself !"

At the shocked and confused look on their faces, Firestar began to tell them about what happened that day : how Tigerstar (Tigerclaw back then) had sent many patrols away so the Camp was left defenseless. He retailed how he and Cloudpaw (who was a beginning apprentice then) saw the traitor leading a large group of rogues all the way to the camp.

When he finished, he could see the horror in the eyes of his fellows leaders who stood there in stunned silence. After a moment, Leopardstar was the first one to regain her composure as she asked "Why would he do that ?" Firestar sighed deeply before responding "Tigerstar always wanted to be a Leader... He killed Redtail during a fight with Riverclan for Sunningrocks moons ago..." "I remember this battle... Oakheart died of rockfalls..." Leopardstar inquired in a soft tone and a pained look on her face.

"Yes but Tigerstar told us that Oakheart was the one who killed Redtail... and that he killed the Riverclan Deputy in return..." Firestar's words seemed to anger the dappled golden tabby she-cat because her fur bristled in fury "He did WHAT ?!" she snarled in anger as her amber eyes were locked on his in anger and disbelief. "Its true Leopardstar ! Ask Graystripe he will confirm it... He was there when Tigerstar had said those lies !"

Leopardstar staid silent for a moment as if her mind was processing those words but then she calmed down "You never had the reputation of a liar Firestar... I believe you..." To say that the Skyclan Leader was shocked by those words were understandable : after all, Leopardstar showed him nothing but hostility since the day Whiteclaw died and now she was speaking to him in a calm tone.

Regardless, he nodded at her before looking at Tallstar when the old black-and-white tom said in a calm and neutral tone " From what we saw of Tigerstar's behavior so far, its not difficult to see you're telling the truth young Firestar... But what happened since your banishment ? How did you became a Leader ? And did you create a Clan of your own ?"

Leopardstar looked at the bright-flame colored tom with curiosity as she also wanted to know. Firestar took a deep breath before saying "Its a long story... but after Tigerstar banished us, we had to find a she-cat willing to take care of Graystripe's kits for a while..." he was interrupted by Tallstar whose fur bristled in indignation as he hissed in fury "Tigerstar banished KITS ?!"

Firestar nodded "He did... He said and I quote *'You can take those filthy Half-Clan kits with you ! I don't want them in Thunderclan !'* " Tallstar growled in outrage at the thought of a Leader banishing young kits and Leopardstar seemed to think the same because she looked just as furious.

"We met up with my sister and mother who happened to knew a she-cat who recently gave birth... We went to visit her and after some explanation, she was willing to nurse them..." The two other Leaders seemed to calm down a little with those words even if the anger was still present in their eyes.

"We staid with her until Stormkit and Featherkit were old enough to stop nursing... and then we began a journey to find Creampelt's home..." Again the young Leader was interrupted but this time by Leopardstar " Creampelt ?" "She is the she-cat who nurse Graystripe's kits... Yes she is a Clan Cat..." Firestar responded to them calmly.

"Of which Clan ? I never heard of a 'Creampelt' before ?" Tallstar asked him with a frown and Firestar knew they wouldn't like what he was about to say next "She is a Warrior of Skyclan..." Of course before they could ask him more questions, Firestar told them about how the Four Clans chased Skyclan of the Forest Territories moons along with all the dangers the banished Clan endured after that.

When he stopped talking, Leopardstar and Tallstar had a pained

look on their faces as they looked down at the ground in shame "I can't believe our ancestors did this..." the black-and-white tom muttered in disbelief and the dappled golden tabby she-cat nodded her head in agreement "They might have a good reason to did this but still..." "The past is the past... We cannot change it now... What matter now is what we are doing **now**..." Firestar said back in a firm but calm tone.

Tallstar chuckled to himself as he looked back at the young tom before him "Wise words for one so young... but you are right..." "Indeed... now back to your story..." Leopardstar inquired to change the subject "Oh right... when we finally found Skyclan, their Leader Dovestar , a pale gray she-cat with green eyes , allowed us to stay after we saved Weaselpelt and her apprentice from a fox..."

"Weren't they a bit hesitant to let you all in ?" Tallstar asked him with a frown "They were but they knew we weren't responsible for what happened to their ancestors so...." "I understand..." the black and white tom bowed his head in respect. "Anyway... I discovered that I wasn't born a kittypet and instead I was born in Skyclan !"

The two Leaders seemed shocked by those revelations "I knew you were far too courageous to be a kittypet !" Tallstar said with a chuckle and Leopardstar agreed with her peer. " Yes I was surprised too... I got to meet my mothers..." "Wait 'mothers' ?" Leopardstar asked with a frown of confusion. "Yes Russetpelt and Brownleaf are mu mothers... They asked a tom named Jake to... you know..." the Riverclan Leader nodded as she understood. "I knew it... the second I saw you I knew you were Jake's son... You look like him..." " I know... My adoptive mother , Nutmeg, said that my father used to tell her stories about a black and white tom he befriended..."

At those words, Tallstar looked up at the sky with a soft smile on his face. Leopardstar coughed to go back to what they were discussing "Later, our Deputy, Hawkfeather joined the Elders and Dovestar chose me as the New Clan Deputy..." "It must have been a real shock for you !" Tallstar inquired gently in a friendly manner "It was ! I never thought in my life I would become a Deputy.... But here I was..."

"I may not know you well Firestar but from what I saw and heard

from many, you always put your comrades' needs before yours... Dovestar had chosen well..." Leopardstar said carefully but with a neutral expression on her face. Firestar stood there watching the Riverclan Leader with disbelief. Never before he received a compliment from the dappled golden tabby molly...

"Thank you Leopardstar..." he managed to say and the Riverclan Leader bowed her head in full respect for her peer. "If you are Leader... That's mean Dovestar passed away... My condolences again..." Tallstar said to the younger tom with a pained expression on his face "She died of sickness... The Whole Clan miss her but we have to move on... I received my nine lives from Starclan and I chose Nightfur as my Deputy..."

"I always thought that if you somehow become a Leader, you would chose Graystripe as your Deputy !" Tallstar remarked with a playful raise-brow "I wanted too at first but I had to chose someone who is not mouse-brained and would not tease his Leader for having a mate to love..."

"Who is your mate ?" Leopardstar asked him with curiosity and Firestar smiled warmly as he responded "Creampelt... We became mates some times after me , Graystripe, Cloudtail and Brightheart joined Skyclan..." "And where is she now ?" Tallstar asked his friend's son with a smile "She is still at camp... in the nursery..." "Congratulations ! I hope your kits would take after their father !" The Black-and-white tom said to the Skyclan Leader who nodded in head in gratefulness.

"Firestar... forgive me to ask this but... Why did you came back ? You have a family who love you and a Clan to take care of... If I were you I wouldn't return..." Leopardstar asked him with seriousness as her amber eyes were locked on his emerald green ones.

" During a patrol, one of my Warriors found Mistyfoot in our territory... She revealed to us what Tigerstar was doing here and after some discussions with my Clan-mates... We decided to help you..." Firestar explained calmly knowing that one of them would ask him the real reason. He wasn't disappointed "But still why ?" Tallstar asked him with confusion.

"Because it is the right thing to do... I might have a family and a new Clan... I would NEVER forget the friends I made here and I don't want them to suffer because of Tigerstar and his treachery ! Skyclan chose to follow me because they want to prove they are not heartless with others' sufferings !"

Firestar's speech seemed to take his effect on the two other Leaders because they bowed their heads respectfully to him "Still the same cat I met moons ago... You might be young but your heart is pure and noble... Skyclan is lucky to have a Leader such as you..." Tallstar said in a proud tone which caused Firestar to be a bit embarrassed but still he managed to kept a straight face as he bowed his head back at the older tom.

"Now its time to discuss the real problem : Tigerstar !" Leopardstar said , spatting at the mention of the actual Thunderclan Leader. "I think its too late now... We will discuss this tomorrow... Me and my Clan need to rest..." "Understood... Again welcome back Firestar and... Thank you for helping us..." Tallstar inquired softy and Leopardstar thanked the young tom as well before adding "We will tell our Clans about what you revealed to us !"

Firestar then bid his farewell before trotting toward the Windclan's cam entrance. Then he mewled loudly which caught the attention of the Cats present "Skyclan ! We leave !" the bright-flame colored tom inquired and Graystripe, Cloudtail and Weaselpelt stopped what they were doing to join him.

As the Skyclan Cats left, Tallstar coudln't help but muttering softy with confidence "Now we have a better chance to get rid of Tigerstar and his lackeys..." Leopardstar nodded in agreement before the two of them approached their respectives Clan-mates to deliver the news.

Back to the Skyclan Cats, they were walking toward their improvised camp silently. Firestar , at the same time, was thinking about the Cats back at Skyclan Camp and particularly at a certain large cream furred molly. *"Starclan please take care of my Clan... and give us strength to face Tigerstar once and for all !"* the young Leader prayed his ancestors as the group soon joined Nightfur, Mistfur , Croweye , Foxclaw and Kestrelfeather who had made some nests for

the newcomers as well as a small pile of fresh-kill.

Firestar watched his comrades with a small before looking up at the sky , again praying his Warrior ancestors to protect them all.

(To be continued...)

Note : Yes I create a more gentle Leopardstar and I hope you won't mind. I wanted a better relation between Firestar and her... What do you think ?

Chapter 21 : Plans

The sun was high in the sky as Firestar led his Warriors toward the Windclan's camp. The night before, he was wondering what should he do to Tigerstar once everything would be done : he knew deep down that he couldn't let the treacherous dark tabby alive or he would get revenge on everyone and cause more problems than he already did.

When the group arrived, they were greeted by the Windclan Deputy , Deadfoot "You finally came Firestar ! Tallstar and Leopardstar are waiting for you !" The bright-flame colored tom deeped his head in acknowledgement before asking "What about Nightstar ? Surely he would be with us..."

"Tallstar send Mudclaw to warn Shadowclan about your return... Our Leader also ordered him to tell them your story..." Deadfoot responded before adding with a chuckle "Surprisingly none of them believed Tigerstar in the first place and in fact were happy you were alive..." But then the amusement in the twisted-legged black tom's eyes disappeared to add in a more serious tone "Some of our exiles rejoined the Clan however...."

"Who ?" Firestar asked the Windclan Deputy worriedly as his fur bristled in shock at the news. "You will see..." was Deadfoot's answer as he turned around to led them straight into the camp. Firestar glanced at his friend Graystripe who shared the same worried expression on their faces as well as a hint of anger. Those cats were among those who attacked Thunderclan moons ago AND helped Tigerstar to kill Bluestar !

The young Skyclan Leader lifted his tail , gesturing them to follow him as he passed through the tangle of gorses which protected Windclan Camp. Once they emerged on the other side of it, they instantly caught the attention of the Cats present and among them Tallstar and Leopardstar. Speaking of the Riverclan Leader, Firestar had never thought she would treated him nicely. After all, each

time they saw each other in the past always ended up with a snarl or a cold attitude. But her behavior the other day proved him that everything was possible. *"Maybe she realized it was an accident ?"* Firestar asked himself internally as he glanced at the Dappled Golden Tabby she-cat.

"Greetings Firestar ! Deadfoot must have told you we were waiting for you...." The Windclan Leader said to the younger tom in a friendly manner and Firestar returned the gesture " Greetings Tallstar Leopardstar ! And yes he did.... But where is Nightstar and his Clan ?" Indeed, we could only see Cats from Skyclan, Riverclan and Windclan in the camp. No sight of Shadowclan.

" They might be on their way... After all Shadowclan is not know for their punctuality..." Leopardstar inquired with a hint of humor in her voice and her fellow leaders couldn't retain a snort of amusement. "They might not be punctual but they are better than us in some ways like sneaking in the shadows..." Firestar retorted calmly as his green eyes looked at the two other Leaders who agreed with him.

"Yes each Clan had their weakness and their strength.... Speaking of this what is the most noticeable thing in your Clan Firestar ? We know every Clans' strength but not yours..." Tallstar asked the Skyclan Leader who smirked deviously before turning his head toward his Warriors "Weaselpelt !" he called out for the brown-and-white molly who stopped her discussion with Morningflower to approach him "Yes Firestar ?"

The bright-flame pelted Leader glanced at his fellow Leaders with a grin before lowering his head so it was near the she-cat's ears and whispering something which caused Weaselpelt's eyes to widen in surprise. But then her surprised expression turned into a playful one as she nodded to her Leader "Alright Firestar...." However when she said this, a sparrow passed just above them.

As fast as she could, Weaselpelt jumped and the bird found itself between the jaws of the molly who landed on her paws with her prize. Firestar purred in satisfaction "This sparrow is yours to keep Weaselpelt... Nice catch !" The molly purred in appreciation and trotted away with the bird between her fangs. Then Firestar turned

around to face his fellow Leaders who were looking back at him with wide eyes of shock.

"I'm sure you enjoyed the demonstration ?" The young Skyclan Leader asked them with a hint of amusement and the question caused them to regain their composure quickly "Before you ask anything, look closely at Weaselpelt's back legs..." Firestar inquired them and the two followed his lead. The Brown-and-white molly was talking with Croweye , her former apprentice, and didn't noticed that Tallstar and Leopardstar were watching her .... well... more like staring at her legs.

"As you saw, Skyclan Cats are made for jumps but we are also good at climbing trees..." Firestar explained to his fellow Leaders who stopped staring at Weaselpelt to look back at him , listening. Tallstar opened his mouth to say something when a voice echoed from the camp entrance "Really impressing I have to admit !" Every cats present turned their heads to see Nightstar standing at the entrance along with 5 other Warriors and among them, three cats Firestar instantly recognized.

However it seemed that he wasn't the only one "Blackfoot !" Graystripe snarled angrily as his yellow eyes glared daggers at the old Deputy of Shadowclan who hissed back at him menacingly. The Skyclan Warriors and apprentices formed a front , all of them hissing at the tall white tom with black paws who didn't backed down despise being outnumbered.

The other cats Firestar recognized were Boulder and Russetfur. The former was a big skinny gray tom with a torn ear and blue eyes while the latter was a dark ginger she-cat with green eyes.. The two of them were rogues before joining Shadowclan. But then they followed Brokenstar in his exile and later helped Tigerclaw to attack Thunderclan so the dark brown tabby could kill Bluestar.

"Enough !" Firestar shouted to his Clan-mates who all calmed down but they still glared at Blackfoot especially Graystripe. He himself wasn't a fan of the former Shadowclan Deputy either so he understood Graystripe's hatred. But then he looked away from his comrades to look at a certain black tom with yellow-green eyes "Nightstar..."

The Shadowclan Leader bowed his head in greetings "Firestar... Welcome back..." The Skyclan Leader nodded his head in appreciation before asking "How was life in your Clan ?" "At first peaceful... until Tigerstar threatened to attack us if we don't give him and his Clan our territory..." the last part was almost hissed in fury. Firestar noted the anger in the other Shadowclan Cats' eyes.

The bright-flame colored tom growled in equal anger : he knew Tigerstar was ambitious but to threaten another Clan ? This was low ! However, he quickly pulled himself out his thoughts when Graystripe's hiss reached his ears "What are *they* doing there ?!" As he said this, the gray tom was glaring at Blackfoot, Russetfur and Boulder.

"Graystripe..." Firestar called out to his longtime friend who quickly calmed down but didn't stopped glaring at the cats who formally helped Tigerstar. "However he is right... Those cats helped Tigerstar and Brokenstar in the past... so why are they here with you Nightstar ?" The Skyclan Leader asked the black tom who staid silent for a moment before answering "I think they might explain themselves..."

Nightstar then nodded his head at the three who stepped closer. The trio glanced at each other before Blackfoot took a step forward "Firestar... I know it won't help our case but we are sorry for what we did in the past..." "We had no choice... The Warrior Code stated that a Leader's word is law...." Russetfur added with a pained look on her face.

Firestar eyed the three critically for a moment but then he sighed "Alright... like I said before, the past is in the past... What matter is what we are doing now... If you chose to stop helping Tigerstar and instead helping those who need it... I'm willing to give you a chance..." Those words caused the three former rogues to lose their tensed bodies while sighing in relief.

The Skyclan Leader glanced at his longtime friend who reluctantly nodded his head and Cloudtail did the same. It would take for those two (especially Graystripe) to warm up to the three former rogues. It was at this moment that Leopardstar stepped forward " We had something to discuss about if I remember correctly..." "Yes..." the

other Leaders said at the same which caused them to look at each other.

It was comical scene to see. Leopardstar retained herself to laugh as she led the other Leaders to a secluded area of the Windclan's camp. They formed perfect circle and looked at each other. But then Nightstar inquired that their Deputies should be there as well which the others agreed as they called for their respective second-in-commands : Nightfur for Skyclan, Deadfoot for Windclan, Mistyfoot for Riverclan and Russetfur for Shadowclan.

Firestar was surprised to see Mistyfoot , Bluestar's daughter, as Riverclan Deputy and congratulated her which caused her to purr in appreaciation. The Deputies sat at their respective Leaders' side , greeting each other. Then silence reigned between them as they waited for someone to start the discussion.

After a moment, Tallstar cleared his throat which caught the others' attention before saying in a clear and firm tone, showing the gravity of the situation "My friends ! We are all gathered here to discuss about our next actions against Tigerstar , his Clan and their allies ..." " They are far too many of them ... We are out-numbered... We can't attack them frontally !" Nightstar remarked as he sat at the left side of Firestar.

"There must be something we can do ! We cannot just give them our territories !" Leopardstar inquired sternly , her tail lashing back and forth behind her, showing her anger. However, Firestar wasn't listening...in fact he was deep in thought... then an idea formed in his mind "What if... we divided them ?" he asked out-loud to himself but it was loud enough for the others to hear him.

"What do you mean Firestar ?" Mistyfoot asked him with confusion "Yes explain what you have in mind Firestar...." Tallstar inquired the youngest Leader of the four with eyes full of curiosity " Tigerstar allied himself with rogues from Two-legs Place right ?" Firestar asked them and all Cats , apart of his Deputy, nodded their heads. "What if we find a way to break this 'alliance' and instead made them hate each other ?"

The group looked at the bright-flame colored tom with frowns at

first, but then their eyes brightened considerably "It might work...." Tallstar whispered softy as he looked at the others cats around him. Leopardstar and Nightstar seemed to agree with this idea and some of the Deputies (especially Nightfur, Russetfur and Mistyfoot) were also in agreement.

However, Deadfoot asked in a skeptical and intrigued tone "But how can we do this ? We don't even know what Tigerstar promised them !" "I might help with that !" a voice said behind the group who all turned their heads to see Boulder approaching them. "What do you mean ?" Firestar asked him with a frown but also with some curiosity. "Before I left, Tigerstar ordered me to help him to find some reinforcement... I was once a member of Bloodclan but I left because I had enough of their actions... I don't know how but this disgusting fox-dung knew about my past..."

"Continue..." The bright-flame colored tom inquired as his interest was growing up. "I led him through Two-legs Place toward where Bloodclan resided... I tried to warn him that they were dangerous especially their leader... " Boulder shivered for a moment but managed to continue "His name is Scourge and he is bloodthirsty and fast ! His Deputy, Bone, is almost as cruel as him..." a growl escaped from his throat at the mention of the tom's name.

"I was there when Tigerstar and Scourge were talking... Tigerstar promised him half of the forest in exchange of their helps..." When Boulder said this, the Leaders' fur bristled in fury and indignation and their Deputies were just as furious. "Thank you Boulder... with this detail it much easier to fool both Tigerstar and Scourge !" Firestar remarked with a grin as his emerald green eyes looked at everyone present who instantly did the same.

"Yes ! If we can convince Scourge and his Clan that Tigerstar is using them for his own gain, they would get rid of this fox-heart for us !" Mistyfoot said from her place next to Leopardstar who gave a toothy grin to her Deputy who returned it. "And when Thunderclan and Bloodclan would be too busy to fight each other..." Nightstar began to say before Russetfur added " we can finish the job !"

"Wait ! There is something we need to see first !" Firestar remarked out-loud before adding when the others looked at him " We don't if

everyone in Thunderclan is agreeing with Tigerstar ! Its not fair to condemn all of them for their Leader's and Deputy's mistakes !"

"Firestar is right ! Cinderpelt, a member of Thunderclan, went against Tigerstar to help us when he needed it... We can't just kill everyone in Thunderclan !" Nightstar said in agreement to the Skyclan Leader's words. Leopardstar and Tallstar staid silent but they had to admit that their fellow Leaders had a point : we cannot condemn an entire Clan because of a Leader's mistake especially with a leader as cruel as Tigerstar.

"But what can we do ? We cannot just jump into their camp and ask them who isn't agree with Tigerstar's action !" Mistyfoot remarked out-loud to the Cats around her. "No but... when we will confront both Bloodclan and Thunderclan, we will give them a chance to join us !" Deadfoot said from his seat and everyone agreed with him.

Firestar internally smiled : it was heart-warming to see Clans, who were rivals for a long time, working together against a common enemy. Hope was filling his heart as he was thinking that everything would be alright. The menace who represent Tigerstar and his allies would be a memory once deal with and the Clans would once again know nothing but prosperity and peace.

(To be continued...)

Chapter 22 : Confrontations and Coming War

Firestar was laying down among the grasses , currently sharing a piece of prey (a rabbit) with Graystripe as around them, the rest of the Skyclan Cats were either sharing tongues or chatting. It had been four days since his talk with the other Leaders and their plans to devide Thunderclan and Bloodclan were made and ready to go.

"Firestar... When are we going to talk with this... what was his name again ? Scourge ?" the gray tom asked his Leader and long time friend as he licked his lips.

"We won't have to wait too long... The sooner this mission is done, the sooner we can go home..." The bright-flame pelted tom responded after swallowing a piece of meat. "You mean : the sooner its done, the sooner you can go back to your love~" Graysripe retorted with amusement and mischief. Firestar glared at him at those words but then sighed " Can you blame me ? Creampelt must have gave birth and I was not there to..." "I know... " His friend interrupted him as he punched his Leader's shoulder friendly.

"I'm sure she would be fine Firestar ! If she really gave birth then I'm sure my apprentice took great care of her !" a new voice echoed near them and the two toms turned their heads to the right to see Kestrelfeather , their Medicine Cat, approaching them. The flame furred young Leader purred a greeting to his head who pressed her head against his ,purring back with affection.

"Firestar ! How long do we have to stay here ? This waiting is so BORING !" another voice, a masculine one, shouted to their left and the young Leader sighed deeply before responding " We will wait until its time Cloudtail ! I know you want to go back to Brightheart but for now, be patient !" The white long-furred young Warrior grumbled something under his breath and Croweye , his friend , shot him an amused glance.

Firestar knew that some of his Warriors where getting impatient but they had no choice but to wait... even if it was indeed, getting on their nerves. They had been here for a few days and nothing happened : no attacks, no threats, nothing... As if neither Tigerstar and his Clan nor Bloodclan were present. The lack of actions from their enemies were surprising many in fact but they couldn't let their guards down.

However, he was pulled out his thoughts when someone bursted into their 'camp' in panic. The Skyclan Cats formed a line as they hissed at whoever came but all of them calmed down when they realized it was none other than Onewhisker. The brown tom seemed exhausted and the smell of fear was radiating from him "Onewhisker ! What's going on ?" Firestar asked his Windclan Friend with concern. The last time he had seen him like this was when Shadowclan and Riverclan attacked their camp days after he and Graystripe escorted Windclan back to their territory.

"Firestar ! You and your Warriors must come quickly !" Onewhisker managed to say between deep breaths before adding "Tigerstar... Thunderclan... They are here ! And they brought Bloodclan with them !" The Skyclan Cats murmured to each other in surprise and Firestar's emerald eyes were wide in shock : why Tigerstar decide to come now of all times ? But then he regained his composure before saying in a stern and firm tone "Onewhisker lead the way ! Skyclan with me !"

The Windclan Cat instantly turned back to rush toward his Clan's camp and he was quickly followed by Firestar and his troop. As they approached, the Skyclan's Leader's fur bristled as he recognized the strong voice of his nemesis "I give you one more chance to join me ! If you don't then all of you... will die !" Firestar growled at hearing this and he could hear some of his Warriors, especially Graystripe and Cloudtail doing the same.

"We will NEVER join you Tigerstar ! You are cruel and bloodthirsty ! I would rather DIE than join you , you fox-dung !" Tallstar's voice responded with in a snarl. "And what do you think Leopardstar ? Nightstar ? Are you both foolish enough to try to challenge me ?" Tigerstar asked the Riverclan and Shadowclan Leader with a hint of menace in his tone.

There was a short silence before one of the two , Leopardstar by the voice responded to the Thunderclan Leader " You stole our territory from us... You threated us to join you... DO YOU REALLY THINK WE WILL BE STUPID ENOUGH TO FOLLOW A SCUM LIKE YOU ?!" the dappled golden tabby she-cat yelled out in pure anger and Firestar could hear some yowls of agreement coming from the Windclan Camp.

"She is right ! You DARE threaten us to join and you are stupid enough to believe we will join you ! Shadowclan won't follow you ! Over my dead body !" Nightstar's voice said after Leopardstar and again, yowls and cheers could be heard from the Camp. "IDIOTS ! All I wanted to unite the Clans but NO ! You have to be stubborn ! Today, the age of the Four Clans will end ! Bloodclan and Tigerclan will rule the Forest !" Tigerstar hissed back in pure anger and a hint of madness in his voice.

Firestar glanced at his group and all of them were growling in pure anger and he knew he had to step in now. Ignoring Onewhisker's protest, he bursted out of the tangle of gorses before saying loudly "If you want to attack them Tigerstar you will have to go through me first !" As he finished talking, the rest of his troop appeared and formed a line with their Leader, hissing and snarling toward the Thunderclan Cats who stood there shocked by the sight of the hostile newcomers.

Tigerstar's amber eyes were wide in shock but then he growled deeply as he narrowed his eyes muttering in a voice filled with venom "*You...*" "Long time no see *Tigerstar* !" The bright-flame colored tom snarled back as his emerald green eyes glared at his enemy with nothing but pure hatred. Then he pulled his eyes away from the dark brown tabby to look at the Thunderclan Cats : all of them were looking at him with surprise and some of them looked relieved to see him.

But they were a few who were glaring at him with disgust and fury : there were none other then Darkstripe, Longtail, Dustpelt, and Swiftpaw (who surely had a new name but he didn't know what). There were also two young cats who were surely apprentices who were looking at him : the first one was a tortoiseshell-and white she-cat with clear green eyes while the second was young tom who

was a carbon copy of Tigerstar. The two of them were looking at him with wide eyes of shock but also of curiosity.

Firestar then looked away from the apprentices to see the other group of Cats standing near Thunderclan's side : many of them harbored a collar filled with teeth of Dogs and/or Cats. They looked strong and fierce. However two of them caught his attention : the first of the two was a massive, black-and-white tom with green eyes, and a battle-scarred pelt. He also had a scar between his eyes and like, others, had a collar filled with fangs.

The second had an aura of strength and authority around him despise his small size. Indeed, he was a small black tom with a single white paw, along ice-blue eyes and a torn left ear. Around his neck was a purple collar who also had fangs in-crusted in it. Firestar recognized him as Scourge , Bloodclan Leader. The small tom's eyes was looking at him neutraly but Firestar could smear he saw a hint of shock in them.

"Fireheart... I thought you were dead... and it was better this way !" Tigerstar snarled in fury as his amber eyes glared at his enemy. The bright-flame colored tom returned the glare before responding in a cold tone "Its *Firestar* now if you hadn't noticed !" he used his tail to point at the mark on his forehead "And I'm so glad to disappoint you, you piece of fox-dung !" he added with a hiss of hatred which caused the dark brown tabby to snarl back. "As if Starclan would allow a kittypet to be a Leader ! A Leader of which Clan ?" Darkstripe has he stepped closer to stand at the right side of Tigerstar, sneering at the flame furred tom.

Graystripe growled and stepped closer to snarl "Firestar is a better than you or this scum will ever be !" his yellow eyes narrowed at both Thunderclan Leader and Deputy as he said this. The rest of Skyclan Cats hissed in agreement at their comrades' words. Darstripe growled back at him and the two of them were glaring hatefully at each other.

Tallstar then went over to stand with Firestar , glaring at the Thunderclan Leader " You lied to everyone Tigerstar ! You are not worthy to be a Leader nor deserve to be called one !" Before the dark brown tabby tom could answer, Leopardstar and Nightstar

went to stand with their fellow Leaders "You lead your Clan with brutality and strength ! Thats not how a Leader should be !" Nightstar began to say before the Riverclan Leader took over " And you dare take territories which aren't yours and allied yourself with strangers to do your dirty work !"

Tigerstar , who was now out of patience, decided to speak "ENOUGH ! YOU CHOSE TO CHALLENGE THEN YOU WILL DIE LIKE THE IDIOTS YOU ARE !" then he looked at the Bloodclan Cats before shouting loudly "BLOODCLAN ATTACK !" No one moved. "ATTACK ! ITS AN ORDER !"

Scourge then slowly approached to face the angered Thunderclan Leader before saying in a cold and neutral tone "Tigerstar ! My Clan are not your servants ! They will attack when **I** say so !"

Tigerstar looked at him disbelief and anger as if he couldn't believe that this small tom would challenge him. Scourge , however, ignored him as he looked at Firestar "I am Scourge , Leader of Bloodclan..." " Greeting Scourge, I am Firestar, Leader of Skyclan... And I must tell you that you are doing a mistake by following Tigerstar !" "And why that ?" Scourge asked him with hidden curiosity.

"Tigerstar is a treacherous tom who would stop at nothing to gain more and more power !" He began to say before saying in a much louder tone so everyone could hear him "Cats of Thunderclan and Bloodclan, you won't have trouble to believe me ! The schemes of Tigerstar speak to themselves : when he was a warrior , he killed Redtail in a battle with Riverclan for Sunningrocks ..."

"How do you know ? You weren't there when it happened !" Longtail asked him with a frown as he looked at him. "Ravenpaw was the one who told me ..." Firestar began to answer when Darkstripe sneered at him "Oh how convenient to use a dead apprentice for you-" "Ravenpaw is not dead ! Me and Graystripe helped him to escape because he knew too much !" Firestar interrupted him and at those words, a waves of surprised murmurs spreaded among the Thunderclan Cats while Bloodclan's stood there in silence.

"Its the truth !" someone said and everyone turned their heads to see two toms appearing in the camp. Two familiars figures in fact "Ravenpaw ! Barley !" Firestar said as he greeted the two loners. Graystripe was also happy to see the two of them again. But their reunion was quickly broken by Tigerstar whose growls was heard by everyone "Ravenpaw..." The black tom glared at his former mentor with pure hatred.

"Ravenpaw ! Its is true ? Did Tigerstar really killed Redtail ?" Dustpelt asked his brother with hesitation. "He did ! And he accused Oakheart to be responsible !" Ravenpaw snarled as he glared at the Thunderclan Leader who didn't even react when his Clan started to murmur among themselves. "Oakheart died in a rockslides ! He never was killed by Tigerstar !" the black loner added and the murmurs grew.

"He wanted to be Deputy but it was Lionheart who was chosen... But when this noble Warrior died during a Shadowclan attack, Tigerstar finally had what he wanted !" Firestar resumed his explanation while looking at everyone present. He took a short pause before speaking again "But he still wanted more... He created a trap for Bluestar near Thunderpath but Cinderpelt fell in instead !"

At those words, scandalized murmurs and gasps escaped from the assistance but the Bloodclan Cats , again didn't reacted. "He then later led HIMSELF a group of rogues in Thunderclan ! And he used the distraction to kill Bluestar and becoming Thunderclan Leader !" "Its true ! I was among those rogues !" Russetfur yelled out from her place among the Shadowclan Cats. "And I saw myself Tigerstar leading the rogues to Thunderclan as I was with Firestar when it happened !" Cloudtail added as he stepped closer to face the assistance. "He banished us because we knew he was responsible !" Graystripe shouted from his place near Weaselpelt.

The Thunderclan Cats were speechless as they only stood there watching them with horror in their eyes. "Tigerstar then used Dogs to kill us when we refused to join him the first time !" Tallstar announced as he glared at the dark brown tabby who returned the glare, still silent. "He was helped by Darkstripe who I saw creating creating a path made of dead rabbits to our territory !" Onewhisker snarled as he glared at the Thunderclan Deputy who growled back

at him.

"That Tigerstar's history : What does it say ? That Tigerstar would do anything to gain power and would share with no one else !" Firestar finished as he looked at the Bloodclan Leader who then went deep in thought. But the Skyclan Leader then regained his attention when he said those words "Scourge... I don't know you but by the look, you are not the type of Cats who would send Dogs to do your jobs , am I right ?"

The small black tom's blue eyes looked at him and nodded , still silent. "So why would you ally yourself with a coward who cannot do things by himself and instead rely on Dogs of all things ?" Firestar asked him again in a neutral tone , ignoring the snarl he was receiving from Tigerstar. " Never once he mentioned something with Dogs... If I knew, I would NEVER have accepted his offer !" The Scourge glared at the Thunderclan Leader before saying "Our deal is broken Tigerstar ! From now on, your Clan won't receive Bloodclan's help !"

Ignoring the angry glares from Tigerstar , Scourge looked back at the Skyclan Leader " I will think about your words... There will be no battles today !" However, the Thunderclan Leader was LIVID ! He snarled in rage before pouncing on the small black tom shouting loudly "TRAITOR !"

However, Scourge dodged him and , swiftly clawed Tigerstar's shoulder which caused the Thunderclan Leader to yowl in pain. Firestar's blood froze when he saw that Scourge's claws were reinforced with sharp Dogs' fangs. Soon, he saw Tigerstar falling on his back exposing his belly and his emerald eyes widened when he saw Scourge delivered a terrible blow which ripped open Tigerstar's neck, chest and stomach.

The dark brown tabby hacked in pain, spitting out blood as he fell on his side, his body twisting as he hissed in agony. But then he suddenly stopped moving. Firestar and the other Leaders knew that he was in trans ,waiting for Starclan to heal his body. But something was wrong, the body laid there without moving even after a long time. A frown appeared on Firestar's face as he looked at the body of his enemy but then a thought entered his mind :

what if Starclan NEVER gave him nine lives ? If it was the case then that explain the lack of return from Tigerstar.

Around him, the reactions were the same : shock, surprise and disbelief. All of them were wondering why Tigerstar, the bloodiest and maybe the strongest Leader of the Forest was still ins-conscious. "That what happen to those who challenge Bloodclan ! Your friend here thought he could control us ! He was wrong !" Scourge said to the Clans in a neutral tone, he didn't seemed to cared that he killed his former ally.

"Everyone just want to live in piece !" Nightstar retorted as he looked at the Bloodclan Leader "We are sorry that Tigerstar lured you here with his lies..." Tallstar inquired as he stood near his fellow Leaders. "Take the time to hunt before returning home..." Firestar inquired them but then Scourge retorted in a neutral but stern tone "Returning home ? We aren't going anywhere, Forest Fools ! Its our home now ! But I understand that you need to think about this, So I give you three days ! At the fourth you will either leave or fight us !"

Before Firestar or another Leader could retort, Scourge lifted his tail before leading his Clan away, leaving the group of stunned Cats behind. The Skyclan Leader glanced at the body of his nemesis with a scowl *"Even in death you still manage to give us trouble !"* he thought to himself before glancing at the gathered Cats around him.

"What are we going to do ?" Longtail asked everyone with a hint of fear in his voice "We cannot fight them !" Goldenflower added with a clear tone. "They will slaughter us all !" Willowpelt said in defeat. Sadly some of the Riverclan, Shadowclan and Windclan Cats were saying the same. The Skyclan Cats, however, glanced at each other before looking at Firestar with determination "What are you all ? Cowards ? Mice ? You are Warriors ! The Forest is your territory and yet you would rather leave and suffer disgrace than fight in honor !" the bright-flame colored tom shouted to everyone with disappointment.

"You are right Firestar ! Windclan had lost its home once ! NEVER AGAIN !" Tallstar shouted with determination as he looked at the younger Leader with agreement. "Riverclan will fight at your sides

!" Leopardstar hissed with a hint of excitement.

"Shadowclan won't back down from a fight !" Nightstar remarked as he nodded to his fellow Leaders.

Then the four of them turned their heads toward Thunderclan , waiting for their answers. "You are all mad ! WE CANNOT FIGHT THEM ! If you want to get killed then go on but Thunderclan won't join you ! " Darkstripe said with confidence as he lifted his tail before trotting away. Firestar thought that other Thunderclanners would follow their Deputy but , to everyone's shock, none of them moved... except Swiftpaw.

Darkstripe seemed to have noticed it as well because he turned his head to face his Clan-mates " Why are you still there ? We are leaving !" "You are not our Deputy any longer Darkstripe ! Thunderclan Cats are not COWARDS ! If you want to leave then go on and never return !" Whitestorm remarked in his usual stern tone. Darkstripe looked at the other Thunderclanners for support but he received none, except for Swiftpaw who stood at his side.

Anger filled Darkstripe's eyes as he sneered at them "Fine ! Go fight Bloodclan ! Go kill yourself for all I care ! Swiftwing come !" he and Swiftpaw, now Swiftwing walked away without glancing back. Firestar was wondering what the two would do now as Tigerstar was no more there. But then he shook his head : he had another matter to take care of. Bloodclan was a menace and they had to prepare themselves. War was on the way.

(To be continued...)

Note : Hey guys I think some points need to be clarify... Why Tigerstar died one time unlike the canon ? Easy : Starclan Cats , during his ceremony, refused to give him his lives after what he did because they didn't wanted to repeat the same mistake they did with Brokenstar. Two I wanted to ask you WHO would be a good leader for Thunderclan ?

Chapter 23 : New Allies

Firestar was walking side by side with Tallstar, Leopardstar, and Nightstar along with their respective Deputies (Graystripe was also there because he insisted to come). The group was making its way toward Thunderclan Territory to see what those cats would do now that Tigerstar was no longer among the livings. 3 days have passed since Scourge killed the treacherous dark brown tom and since then, the Clan Leaders (minus Thunderclan) discussed about what they would do.

Without surprise, the choice was made unanimously : Skyclan, Riverclan, Shadowclan and Windclan will fight side by side against Bloodclan. Firestar had been proud to see 3 Clans, who always were rivals, agreeing working with one another. However, they didn't know what Thunderclan would do. After Tigerstar died , his Warriors returned back to their camp with Whitestorm at the lead.

Apart of Bloodclan, the other things that was currently found during conversations was about Tigerstar's death... The tom received nine lives but he died just once... Could it be that Starclan had denied him his lives ? Or did he really went to the Moonstone moons ago ? If Starclan never gave him their blessings then that's explain how Tigerstar died so quickly.

Anyway back to the present, as the group was making its way through Thunderclan Territory, Firestar couldn't help but having his mind filled with memories of the time he used to live there when Bluestar was still alive. A smile appeared on his face as he remembered the day when his old friend Ravenpaw caught a viper during a hunt.

"Are you alright Firestar ?" Graystripe asked him with a raise-brow when he saw the fond look on his friend's face "Huh ? OH don't worry Graystripe... I was just... reminiscing some good moments we had here..." The young Leader of Skyclan responded back as he glanced at his long time friend who nodded his head in

understanding.

Graystripe was born and raised in Thunderclan. When he had been banished from his home, the dark gray tom was saddened and the only consolation he had was having his kits with him. Firestar, while not being born in Thunderclan, had enjoyed the time he passed there and he grew fond on some of the Cats like Whitestorm, Cinderpelt, Yellowfang...

His heart clenched at the memory of Yellowfang, the former Thunderclan Medicine Cat and before that, Shadowclan's . Sure , the grumpy she-cat had a sharp tongue but he grew fond of her after taking care of her back when he was still an apprentice of Thunderclan.

Shaking his head to get rid of those sweet/hard memories, Firestar glanced at the other members of the group and some of them harbored a look of faint hope in their eyes (even if some hidden it well). All of them were wondering what Thunderclan would do : flee for their lives or fight alongside the other Clans against their common enemies.

Now that Tigerstar was dead, they had no reasons to stay ally with Bloodclan. And thankfully now that Darkstripe was gone, Thunderclan will be far better that before. Speaking of the former Thunderclan Deputy... No one from Shadowclan, Riverclan and Windclan had heard about neither him nor Swiftwing. Longtail's former apprentice had decided to follow his Deputy in self-exile after Tigerstar's death.

Firestar frowned as he remembered the look Swiftwing sent to his nephew that day : hatred. Even now, he was wondering why Longtail's former apprentice seemed to dislike Cloudtail THAT much. After all, when the two of them were apprentices (before their banishment), the two seemed like close friends. What happened to Swiftwing during Tigerstar's short reign ?

He sighed deeply as he didn't have any answers for this question but then his attention returned back to Graystripe when the dark gray tom inquired calmly but with a tensed body "We're almost there..." Firestar looked ahead and his friend was right. A few meters away,

was the entrance of the camp. It had been so long since the last time they saw it (The last time was when Tigerstar banished them all after Bluestar's death).

"Are you ready ?" Graystripe looked at him with concern in his eyes and also a hint of fear. Firestar knew why his friend was acting this way : after all, the Thunderclan Cats had been ordered to kill them on sight by their previous leader. The two of them weren't Thunderclan anymore so how will their old Clan would react as seeing them IN their territory ?

"Come on let's go..." Firestar inquired to his comrades before passing through the thick curtains of ferns and gorse that was used to protect the camp. The second he stepped out of it, he could see some Thunderclan Cats sunbathing in front of their dens. But the moment they saw him, they all froze in surprise and shock. And it didn't disappeared when Graystripe, Nightfur and the rest of the group entered the camp.

For a long time, none of the parties moved and instead only stared at each other. But then through the crowd of Thunderclan Warriors, appeared Whitestorm who looked tired but still in his prime. "Firestar ! Welcome back in Thunderclan !" the Noble Warrior greeted his former Clan-mates , friendly. "It is good to see you again Whitestorm !" the bright-flame colored tom greeted back in the same tone.

Whitestorm nodded his head before turning his head toward Graystripe " Welcome back to you as well Graystripe !" The gray tom nodded respectfully to the Elder Warrior before his eyes landed on a pale silver-gray she-cat with blue eyes who was none other than Willowpelt. The molly pressed her head against Graystripe's who purred affectionately "My son you are back~" The she-cat purred lovingly as she stared at her eldest son.

"Yes but not to stay..." Graystripe said in a sad tone as he glanced at Firestar who looked back at him with the same look of sadness. "Yes... You are in another Clan now... But you will always be my son~" Willowpelt said gently as she licked the top of his head. Graystripe blushed under his fur and , it reddened madly when he saw the grin on his best friend's face "Now you know what is it to

be in my place old friend..." the young Skyclan Leader said with a smirk and the gray tom grumbled something under his fur.

"Firestar !" someone called out and the flame pelted tom looked over to see Cinderpelt approaching him with a bright smile on her face. "Cinderpelt !" Firestar called back as he suddenly found himself being tackled by the twisted legged molly who licked his face none stop under the amusement of everyone present. "As touching as this reunion are, we sadly have other matters to attend..." Tallstar remarked after clearing his throat so he could be heard from everyone present.

"He is right... We are here to discuss with your leader and Deputy about Bloodclan..." Leopardstar added as she eyed everyone with a calm expression on her face. She had decided to not hold a grudge against Thunderclan because they were only following Tigerstar's orders. At the mention of Bloodclan, some members of Thunderclan muttered to each other in a fearful tone. After all, Scourge , their Leader, had killed Tigerstar with one blow.

"Shadowclan, Windclan and Riverclan decided to fight !" Nightstar remarked as he stepped forward to look at the Thunderclan Warriors. "And me and my Warriors will assist them ! We came here because we want to know what will you do ?" Firestar asked as his green eyes looked at Whitestorm with seriousness.

The Noble Warrior took a deep breath before saying in his usual deep voice " After Tigerstar died and Darkstripe left, the Clan chose me as its Leader until a new one would take my place..." "With you as Leader, Thunderclan will known prosperity and peace !" Firestar remarked with a frown as he eyed the older tom. "I'm not young anymore Firestar... I won't stay a Warrior for long... A younger cat must become our Leader... "

The young Skyclan Leader nodded his head in understanding : at his age, many would have joined the Elders already. But Whitestorm was right... he won't stay young forever. " I understand Whitestorm but... who will you choose ?" Firestar asked him with curiosity. " Sandstorm..." was the white tom's answer. Firestar blinked when the pale ginger she-cat in question stepped closer to stand at Whitestorm's side.

"Firestar..." she said with a respectful nod which he returned. When he came in Thunderclan, Sandstorm (who was Sandpaw back then) had been among the ones who disliked him because of his supposed origin. But little by little, their relationship became less hostile and friendlier. He cherished their friendship dearly and he did missed her when he was banished from Thunderclan by Tigerstar.

And now that they were reunited together... He learnt that the molly will maybe become Thunderclan New Leader ! Of course, he approved this choice : she was fierce and strong but she could be gentle and kind-hearted when she wanted to be. She would make a good Leader for Thunderclan. He wondered what would have happened if he had succeeded in stopping Tigerstar during the rogues' attack moons ago. Shaking his head to get rid of those thoughts, he looked back toward his fellow Leaders who looked back at him seriously.

"What will Thunderclan do ? Flee like cowards or fight like true Warriors ?" Leopardstar asked them all in a clear tone so everyone could hear her. The Thunderclan Cats glanced at each other , unsure of how to respond : some looked ready to go out and challenge BloodClan while others wanted to leave the forest behind for another territory.

"Thunderclan ! I know I have no right to tell you what to do but hear me out : you are Warriors and as such you are supposed to defend your territory with your life ! Bloodclan had no honor and would kill everyone to the youngest kit just to take over your lands ! Would you really let them slaughter your family and your friends ? Or do you prefer to stay and fight for them ? Skyclan had no rights here but we came here to help because it was the right thing to do ! What say you ?"

Firestar's little speech caused everyone to go deep in thought. The other Leaders were looking at him with amazement but also with determination judging by the flames dancing in their eyes. The Thunderclan Cats chatted with each other and unlike earlier, they didn't have fear in their eyes but determination. Then they all looked at Whitestorm and Sandstorm before nodding their heads.

Whitestorm then looked back at the Leaders with serious

"Thunderclan will fight with you tomorrow against Bloodclan !" the white tom announced firmly and around him, his Warriors yowled in agreement. Firestar glanced at Sandstorm who had a strange look on her face but he recognized it : lounging. " Windclan will be proud to fight at your side !" Tallstar inquired with a soft smile.

"Riverclan is as well..." Leopardstar added but with a bit of reluctance. " Shadowclan is honored to fight at your side !" Nightstar remarked as he stepped forward. " I think its my turn huh ?" Firestar asked with a devious grin on his face which earned him some laughs from the assistance. The other Leaders gave him fake glares for his little joke but they were just as amused. "Skyclan would be more than happy to have Thunderclan as allies !" the bright-flame colored tom remarked as he looked at Whitestorm.

"Firestar, some of us wish to ask you and Graystripe some questions... if you don't mind..." Whistestorm remarked to the younger tom who glanced at his former Clan-mates who all nodded their heads in agreement. Firestar sighed before looking at the other Leaders who seemed ready to leave "I will return later ! Nightfur ! Warn our own that me and Graystripe will return later in the day !" The black tabby tom nodded and him and the others left the camp leaving him and Graystripe with the Thunderclan Cats.

The two long-time friends looked at each other before looking back at their former comrades "So what do you want to know first ?" Graystripe asked them with a smile and Firestar rolled his eyes at his friend's antic.

(To be continued...)

Chapter 24 : War and Victory !

"So it is time..." Graystripe inquired as he and Firestar were leading the Skyclan Cats toward Windclan Camp. That had woke up early in the morning and were now ready for the coming battle. The young Leader had looked at his Warriors with a hint of worry : this battle will be terrible and some cats would surely die. He prayed Starclan that they would get out victorious of this fight so they could return home to their loved ones.

Despise being in the forest where he grew up, Firestar missed his Clan and above all his family. Creampelt must have gave birth to their kits and Goldenpaw must be worried about them all. Graystripe, him, missed his kits, Stormpaw and Featherpaw He wasn't the only one who missed their Clan : Cloudtail was always thinking about Brightheart and about his surely born-kits. The rest of the group too missed their homes but they wouldn't back down from their promise to help.

Firestar then looked back at his longtime friend with a reassuring smile "It is but I know we will win..." then he looked over at his Warriors before saying in a clear and firm tone "We will win because we... are... SKYCLAN ! THE NOBLEST CLAN OF THE WORLD !" As soon as he said this, his Warriors yowled their agreement and the fire in their eyes burned in determination.

Graystripe's remark then caused him to look back at his friend "I always knew you would make a good leader..." Firestar nodded at him before leading his group toward Windclan Camp but they instead found Tallstar, Leopardstar and all their Warriors gathered at the entrance and all seemed to be waiting for them. Another surprise was the presence of Barley and Ravenpaw among the Windclan Warriors !

" Greetings Firestar, Graystripe..." The old black and white tom said to the younger toms who bowed their heads back in a respectful manner as they greeted the two Leaders. Leopardstar didn't said

anything but she greeted them by bowing her head. "It is time... We should go now..." Tallstar inquired as he turned around before walking toward where Four Trees where. Instantly he was followed by his fellow Leaders along with their Clans. During the trip, we could hear the excited murmurs from the apprentices who were totally conscious of the danger they were all about to oppose.

On the way, Firestar and Graystripe got to talk with their friend Ravenpaw who explained that he and Barley chose to help the Clans to drive out Bloodclan. When asked how he knew, the black tom responded that it was Onewhisker who told them. Barley explained to them that he was once a member of Bloodclan but left moons ago because he had enough. He decided to help because he wanted to get rid of Bloodclan so the Cats from Two-Legs place could finally live in peace.

Anyway, the large group of cats almost reached Four Trees when bristles caught their attention and all turned their heads to see Whitestorm and Sandstorm leading the Thunderclan Warriors. "Whitestorm ! Welcome... You too Sandstorm..." Firestar greeted them friendly and they returned the gesture. " Its a dark day for the Clans..." The White tom remarked somberly as his yellow eyes looked at everyone.

"Yes but we will defend our territory at all cost !" Leopardstar replied back sternly and yowls of agreement came from the Riverclan Warriors and from some of the others. Whitestorm nodded and all Four Clans headed toward Four Trees where everything would take place and where Fate will decided WHO will rule the Forest.

Firestar was walking side by side with Whitestorm, Sandstorm and Graystripe. The day before, they answered the questions of their former Clan-mates who were really shocked about what they learned from the two : one than Firestar was never a Kittypet but a Clan-born cat ; two than Skyclan once lived among the Four Clans but were kicked out ; three... well than now they were more happy in Skyclan than they were in Thunderclan.

Some Cats had apologize for not standing more for them the day Tigerstar banished them but the two dismissed them saying that

they did what they could and that they held no hard feelings against anyone. Firestar even got to learn why Swiftwing seemed to dislike (more like hate) his nephew Cloudtail : from what some said, Swiftwing had a crush of Brightpaw and when she left for Cloudpaw... his heart broke and he grew to hate his former friend.

Of course, they returned to their comrades after having some times with the Thunderclan Warriors who seemed pained to not have them in their Clan anymore.

The young Leader even got to known Goldenflower's kits , Tawnypaw and Bramblepaw. The second was carbon copy of Tigerstar but he knew that he couldn't fault this kits for his father's schemes. However, some Thunderclan Cats seemed to dislike them especially the Elders. They had been this way since they learned what Tigerstar truly did in the past.

He took pity of them and the two seemed to like him. The bright-flame colored tom had seen their mother , Goldenflower, giving him looks of appreciation and gratitude for being gentle with her kits despise them being Tigerstar's children. Graystripe seemed to like them too but was more cautious of Bramblepaw. Thankfully, he still managed to hide it to not upset the young tom.

Back to present, the four Clans arrived at their destination and came face to face with Nightstar and the rest of Shadowclan. Blackfoot, Russetfur and Boulder looked at the bright-flame colored tom with determination and he knew that he wanted to prove to everyone that they had changed and weren't the cold rogues who helped Tigerstar and Brokenstar (who apparently died during the rogues attack, courtesy of Mousefur).

"Any news ?" Tallstar asked the Shadowclan Leaders after they all greeted each other. Nightstar shook his head "No nothing... Bloodclan isn't here yet... I send two of my Warriors to look for them... They hadn't returned yet..." the Shadowclan Leader barely finished the last words than his two spies rushed back to them as behind the two was Bloodclan who were advancing toward the Forest Cats menacingly.

Instantly, the Forest Cats formed three lines as they all unsheathed

their claws, glaring at the Cats who wanted to take over their homes. Firestar, Tallstar, Leopardstar, Nightstar and Whitestorm were standing side by side as if they grew up together as all of them looked at their enemies with neutral expression on their faces. They needed to stay calm so their Warriors wouldn't fall into despair.

The Bloodclan Cats stopped a few meters away from the Clans and the two parties glared at each other waiting. Then through the rang of Bloodclan, came Scourge and his massive Deputy (supposed) Bones. The two Bloodclan Cats stepped forward before looking at the Forest Leaders coldy. "Greetings ! So did you made your choices ? Will you leave in peace or do you think you are worthy to fight my Clan ?" the tiny Bloodclan Leader asked them while licking his paw, as if he ate something delicious.

Firestar glanced sideways at the other Leaders who all returned the look : they had made their choices. Tallstar then gestured to him to step forward as he was supposed to be. Indeed, before this day, Tallstar, Leopardstar and Nightstar had all agreed that it should be Firestar who should lead them in battle. Of course, the young fire pelted tom protested saying that he couldn't but then the Leaders listed to him everything he did to the clan until now.

How he helped Shadowclan to drive out Brokenstar ; How he helped Riverclan during their food crisis ; How he brang back Windclan from their exile... Firestar was hesitant but after some times, he had no choice but to accept.

Back to present, the young Skyclan Leader took a few steps forward before looking at the Bloodclan Leader calmly " The Forest belong to us by the wills of Starclan ! We will defend it with out lives if we have too !" Yowls and cheers came from the Cats gathered behind him. When the silence returned, Firestar added neutrally "We give you a chance to go back home and avoiding inutile bloodshed...."

"Returning home ? We are not going anywhere Forest fool ! This place is OUR home now !" Scourge retorted in anger and before Firestar could react, the black tom's fur bristled so much that he seemed bigger and he snarled out "BLOODCLAN ATTACK !" AT those words, Scourge's warriors rushed forward toward the Forest Cats. Pulled out of his shock, Firestar letted out a loud yowl which

caused his comrades and allies to rush toward their enemies.

The calm from earlier was broken as the air was now filled with cries of anger or pain , along with yowls, kisses and snarls. The clearing was now covered with waves of fangs and claws. Firestar had just clawed the face of a large gray tabby who ran away with a cry of pain. As he looked for another opponent, he saw that it was nothing but chaos around him.

Tallstar was fighting with Nightstar against a pair of similar black toms while Leopardstar was biting a tortoiseshell tom on the neck causing him to yowl in pain. Blackfoot was fighting a large brown tom as the two clawed each other. Graystripe was hissing on the face of a ginger tom who growled back at him. Cloudtail was fighting side by side with Croweye and Mistfur and three of them were giving hard times to their opponents who had to flee the clearing.

Nightfur was running after a molly who had her tail between her back-legs, her red fur covered in scratches and bites. Whitestorm was fighting against another white tom while his former apprentice, Sandstorm was snarling at the face of a black she-cat. Weaselpelt jumped on the back on a Bloodclan Warrior before clawing him mercilessly, ignoring his cries of pain.

Firestar couldn't see more because something barreled against his left side and he turned his head to see that it was a gray molly from Bloodclan who was hissing at him. Snarling, he pushed her away from him and pinned her down before raising a clawed paw when he suddenly stopped dead in his tracks.

The molly's belly was too big for a rogue and his eyes widened when he realized that this she-cat was pregnant ! He released his grip on her and she looked up at him with surprise "Go ! A pregnant molly shouldn't be here.. Leave !" She nodded gracefully at him before dashing away as fast as she could. He watched her go before he caught a form heading toward him from the corner of his eyes. He avoided his attacker and turned around to face him... along to be shocked by who it was.

"Darkstripe !" Firestar hissed in surprise as the former Thunderclan

Deputy was standing before him with his usual sneer on his face. "You are mine ! Little kittypet ! You will die !" The gray tabby with black stripes snarled to the Skyclan Leader with hatred on his face. "So you are fighting on the side of Tigerstar's murderer? Have you no loyalty ?" The bright-flame colored tom taunted him which caused his opponent to replied back in anger "Not anymore ! Every cat in the forest can turn to crowfood for all I care ! All I want...is to see you DEAD !"

The gray tom pounced at him and Firestar found himself on his back as he tried to fight back. He managed to claw his opponent's face which caused Darkstripe to jump back with a yelp of pain. The young Leader then managed to get back on his paws before glaring daggers at the former Thunderclan Deputy who looked back at him with rage as blood poured out of the injuries he receives.

"NO ! I refuse to be beaten by a puny kittypet !" Darkstripe snarled in outrage before pouncing on Firestar who instantly went into a defensive position. However, something crashed against Darkstripe's side and Firestar's green eyes widened when he realized who did it : Graystripe ! His long time friend glared at the dark-striped tom with nothing but pure anger and disgust " Traitor !" "Fox-Dung !" Darkstripe snarled back as he pounced on his new opponent who delivered a terrible blow aimed at his neck.

Graystripe's claws pierced the flesh and Darkstripe gasped in shock as blood poured out of his neck. As he laid on the ground, Firestar and Graystripe could hear him saying to himself "There is nothing but darkness... Everything is gone..." then his eyes turned blank as he expired for the last time. Graystripe spitted in disgust "One less traitor in the Forest !" Firestar nodded before looking around : he spotted Nightfur, his Deputy fighting two Toms and he seemed to have some difficulties.

"Graystripe ! Go help Nightfur ! I will look for Scourge !" Firestar ordered his friend who looked back at him with concern "Are you sure ?" The young Leader nodded and the two pressed their heads against each other before separating. As his friend headed toward Nightfur, Firestar's green eyes scanned the area, looking for the Bloodclan Leader which was hard because of the amount of cats gathered in the Clearing.

He could see the corpses of the ones who died but he didn't have time for this. He had to look for Scourge... The War will end when the black tom will be no more. Suddenly he spotted Cloudtail who was circling a cat he recognized instantly : it was Swiftwing ! Thankfully he was close enough to hear what they were saying " Cloudpaw ! You will pay for what you did to me !" the black and white tom snarled to the Skyclan Warrior who hissed back at him.

"First of all its Cloudtail now ! And what did I ever do to you ? I was banished remember ?" The white long-furred tom asked back as the two circled each other. "You take Brightpaw away from me ! You stole her ! She was MINE !" Swiftwing yelled as he pounced on his former comrade who easily dodged his attack. Firestar watched them, fighting each other for a moment until Cloudtail pinned his former friend down "She chose to come with me because she WANTED to ! I never forced her to ! It was HER choice !" "LIAR ! YOU FILTHY KITTYPET !" Swiftwing hissed back as he tried to get up but then gasped when Cloudtail bite him on the neck.

Seeing this, Firestar let out a soft sigh : Swiftwing could have been a noble Warrior if it wasn't for his madness. Now he was dead, killed by the one he saw once as a friend. Shaking his head, he looked away from his nephew (who was standing above the dead body of his former friend with a sad look) to continue his search for Scourge.

His fur bristled when he finally located the small black tom who was cornering Onewhisker near the Great Rock. Yowling a challenge, Firestar jumped toward the Bloodclan Leader who looked away from the Windclan Warrior to look at him with his cold blue eyes. Scourge and him glared at each other before attacking.

Scourge might be small but he was quick and fast. Firestar could barely avoid his enemy's blows but he didn't avoid a nasty one aimed at his head. It was an exchange of claws as the two of them wanted nothing more than win this fight. Firestar knew that of Scourge died, Bloodclan would retreat and also knew that if he lost, everything would be gone. A blow on his shoulder caused him to yowl in pain as he stepped back.

As Scourge slowly went back on his paws, Firestar saw something

that gave him courage and strength : the happy smiles of Creampelt, Goldenpaw and Spottedleaf. As he looked at them, he swore he could hear their voices *"Daddy get up you can do this !"* his adoptive daughter said encouragingly before Creampelt's voice took over *"You promised to come back to me, love... To us~"* Those words galvanized him as now his mind was filled with nothing but determination. He quickly get up before glaring daggers at the Bloodclan Leader who returned the glare.

"Scourge ! Come and fight me !" Firestar snarled defiantly and Scourge looked back at him with amusement and a hint of respect in his blue eyes as he replied back " And that's what I'm going to do !" Then he pounced on the bright-flame colored tom who instantly dodged him before jumping on the smaller tom's back. Scourge was now struggling to escape his grip but Firestar didn't gave him time as he ferociously bite the back of the black tom's neck while using his back legs to claw his body.

Scourge then did something that caught him of guard. He delivered a swift blow with one of his paw whose claws slashed Firestar's neck which caused the Skyclan Leader to gasp in surprise but he didn't released his grip on Scourge's neck. The Bloodclan Leader, as he struggled, did something that offered Firestar a chance to win : the small black tom had exposed the weakest part of his neck by accident and Firestar seized his chance.

He plunged his fangs into the flesh of his enemy who just realized his mistake as it was too late. For a moment, Firestar maintained his grip on Scourge's neck before then releasing it to deliver the ' inutile 'coup of grace'. Scourge laid there on the grasses , his cold blues eyes glaring at Firestar who was standing above him. Blood was pouring out of his injury like waves on the beach. The small black tom tried to hiss but it was only a gurgle-like sound because of the blood in his mouth. Then his eyes went blank and Firestar knew that it was over : Scourge was dead.

Not too far from him, a Gray tom from Bloodclan who was fighting Ravenpaw, saw the dead body of his leader and his green eyes widened in horror as he yelled out in fright "SCOURGE ! SCOURGE IS DEAD !" Another Bloodclan cat saw the body of his leader and yelled out the same thing. Soon all Bloodclan Cats saw Scourge's

body and rushed out of the clearing with frightened look on their faces. They were no more Warriors but a bunch a terrified kittypets who had no place in the forest.

With a triumphant cry, the Forest Cats pursued their enemies, kicking them out of the clearing. Ravenpaw then saw his fire pelted friend standing above the body of Tigerstar's murderer and approached him. However, his joyful expression turned into one of horror when Firestar fell on his side before stopping moving. "FIRESTAR !" the black loner yelled out as he rushed toward the unmoving body of his old friend who was not breathing anymore.

"Firestar ! Please get up !" he whispered softy as he nudged the still unmoving body of Firestar. "Ravenpaw !" The loner turned his head to see Graystripe approaching him "Graystripe ! He needs help !" The gray tom then saw the body of his leader and called out loudly "KESTRELFEATHER !" The Medicine Cat of Skyclan, who was treating Croweye, looked at them and her eyes widened when she saw the body of her nephew laying on the ground. She instantly went at his side before examining him. After a moment, she looked at the two toms who looked back at her expectantly "He just lost a life... All we can do is wait..." the pale brown molly whispered to the two who nodded as they crouched near Firestar's body.

"Firestar !" Another voice called out and they turned their heads to see Cloudtail and Weaselpelt approaching them. The long-white furred Warrior looked at his Uncle and former mentor with wide eyes before asking "What happened ?" "He just lost a life after killing Scourge..." Ravenpaw responded calmly but also with a sad look on his face. "He will come back right ?" Weaselpelt asked the Medicine Cat who nodded at her with a comforting smile.

She had barely said it that a gasp was heard and they looked down to see a waking Firestar whose injury just disappeared "FIRESTAR !" They yelled out as they all embraced him, happy to see him alive and well. "You did it ! You killed Scourge !" Graystripe remarked with joy as he looked at his long time friend who looked exhausted.

"You saved the Forest !" Cloudtail added which caused his Leader to look at him before saying "We ALL saved the Forest Cloudtail !" Then his name was called out again and the rest of the Skyclan

Warrior approached the young Leader with relief. All of them looked battered and exhausted but it seemed like all of them were alive even the apprentices who looked relieved that the fight was over.

"Firestar ! Some Cats are coming !" Sootpaw (his daughter's future mate) warned the young Leader who painfully managed to go back on his paws. Indeed, Leopardstar was approaching the group of Skyclan Cats with some of her own Warriors (among them was Mistyfoot). The dappled golden tabby she-cat bowed in front of the fire pelted tom before saying in a calm but happy tone "Congratulations Firestar ! I heard that you killed Scourge ?" He nodded before asking "I did what will you do now ?" "Riverclan will go back home... We have to take care of our injured and burying the dead..." The Riverclan Leader responded to his question and he nodded in understanding.

"You will finally go back to your home... I'm sure you all missed the taste of fish ?~" he asked her with a playful grin and he could hear some cats laughing "You have no idea..." Leopardstar muttered with playful roll of her eyes as she turned around, leading her Clan away to their own territory.

Firestar and the rest of the Skyclan Cats watched the Riverclan Warriors leaving Four Trees in silence. But then Ravenpaw gasped in shock as his eyes looked at something in the distance. Firestar followed his gaze and his heart clenched when he saw Whitestorm's body laying on the grasses. His white fur was covered in blood.

With a heavy heart, the young Skyclan Leader approached the Noble Warrior's fallen body before glancing at the Cat standing next to it : Sandstorm. "What happened ?" he asked her softy and she looked back at him with sadness clear in her eyes "He was fighting Bone... but he had no chance against him... Bramblepaw, Tawnypaw and some other apprentices killed Bloodclan's Deputy in revenge..." then he looked at him with a more determined expression "He chose me as Thunderclan Leader..."

Firestar bowed his head at her before saying with confidence "You will be a great leader for Thunderclan I can say it..." Sandstorm nodded in appreciation when the sound of paw-steps caused the

two of them to turn their heads. It was the rest of Thunderclan and all of them bowed in front of Sandstorm who looked embarrassed at the attention much to Firestar's amusement.

But then through the group, appeared Tawnypaw who approached the Skyclan Leader with a hesitant look on her face "Firestar... I wanted to ask you something..." Blinking in surprise, the flame colored tom looked at the tortoiseshell and white apprentice "What is it ?" Tawnypaw glanced at her brother with a sad look before looking back at Firestar "Can I join Skyclan ?"

Firestar blinked in shock as around him, everyone looked at the Thunderclan apprentice with surprise. "What ? Tawnypaw don't do this ! You belong to Thunderclan !" Bramblepaw shouted out in despair to his sister who looked back at him sadly "I'm sorry but I don't feel right in Thunderclan... Everyone judge me because of who my father was... Maybe Skyclan could make me happy ?" she asked as she looked hopefully at Firestar who smiled at her "Skyclan would welcome you with open paws...."

Tawnypaw glanced at the other Skyclan Warriors who all looked at her with warm smiles which seemed to comfort her. Bramblepaw seemed hurt by her decision but he understood and the two shared a deep hug. "You know... we won't be leaving for a while so you can have some time with your brother~" Firestar told the she-apprentice who smiled back happily while her brother looked up at the Skyclan Leader with gratitude.

Sandstorm then shouted "Thunderclan ! We are leaving !" at those words, two cats, Dustpelt and Willowpelt picked up the dead body of Whitestorm , carrying him away while the rest of the Thunderclan Warriors left the clearing. Firestar didn't noticed the look of longing Sandstorm was giving him as she glanced at him as he was looking at the two other Clans. Tawnypaw looked at him with gratitude as she walked side by side with her brother before following the rest of her Clan.

He approached Shadowclan first and he was greeted by Russetfur, the Deputy. "Firestar ! It seems we won this war after all !" she said with a smile as she looked at the Skyclan Leader. "Yes where is Nightstar ? I don't see hi-" he paused when he remarked a black

figure laying on the ground. "No... Don't tell me..." "Yes... Our leader was killed by a Bloodclan Warrior..." "But how ? He wasn't so long since he received his nine lives !" Firestar asked her and it was the Shadowclan Medicine Cat Runningnoe who answered him. "He never received his nine lives... Because Brokenstar was still alive and Starclan still saw him as a Leader..."

"I see... Nightstar was a noble Warrior and a wise Leader... He would be missed..." Firestar said to the two who nodded their heads "Thank you for your kind word Firestar... Now I must lead my Clan back home... I'm their new Leader now..." Russetfur inquired and The Skyclan Leader nodded his head in understanding. After saying goodbyes, Russetfur led her Clan all the way back home and some were seen carrying the dead body of their former leader.

Firestar sighed but then he heard some bristles in the bushes and turned his head to see Tallstar and some warriors appearing in the clearing. All of them looked exhausted as they were taking deep breathes. Concerned, Firestar approached them "Wht's happening ? Are you followed by Bloodclan Cats ?" Tallstar looked up at him before saying in an amused tone "No Firestar... WE were the one to chase them... All the way to Thunderpath... They won't come back here !"

Firestar sighed in relief before looking back at the Windclan Leader "Peace will finally return in the Forest... Tigerstar is dead... Scourge is no more and Bloodclan will leave you be..." "All thanks to you and your Clan Firestar ! You gave us courage and strength... We all owe you our liberty..." The black and white tom replied back to the younger tom who seemed embarrassed by the praises.

"We will be staying a few more days in your territory... When we will be strong enough... We will go back home... " Firestar announced to the older tom who had a look of sadness in his eyes "It pain me to see you leave Firestar but I understand... You have a Clan waiting for you... A family to take care of... You are free to stay as long as you want..." Tallstar responded and the two bowed their head to each other.

Ravenpaw and Barley then approached "We will walk with you for a bit... if you don't mind ?" the black loner asked and he received a

friendly punch on the shoulder "Of course we won't mind fur-ball !" Firestar replied playfully which caused the say 'fur-ball' to hiss back in a playful manner. "Now that Scourge is dead, the Cats of Two-Legs Place will finally live in peace..." Barey remarked with relief in his voice.

Firestar and Tallstar nodded before calling out for their respective Clans. Then the two Leaders led their Warriors toward their respective camps (well for Skyclan its a temporal one) so they could treat their injuries and rest their aching muscles after the terrible battle they had endured.

(To be continued...)

Chapter 25 : Aftermath

The sun was brightening the sky when Firestar woke up from his slumber. He stepped out of the den he used since the day him and some Cats of Skyclan first came into the Forest Territories. It had been a few days since the Battle with Bloodclan and all of them had recovered from their injuries and were now ready to go back to their own territory where their Clan was waiting for their return.

"Hey Firestar ! I saved some mice for the both of us !" Graystripe called out to his Leader and long-time friend before tossing him a rather plump mouse. The bright-flame colored tom raised his head and caught the mouse between his jaws before trotting toward his friend so they could eat together like they always did.

"You know... Even if we are going home and return to our peaceful life... I can't help but... I will miss our friends here..." Graystripe whispered to his friend after swallowing a piece of his meal. " I know the feeling... but our mission is done... We have no reasons to stay here anymore..." Firestar replied back calmly and with understanding.

"Now that Bloodclan and that fox-heart of Tigerstar aren't here, the Clans would finally be in peace... more or less..." Graystripe inquired with a devious grin and his friend chuckled in both amusement and agreement. Even if the Clans were safe, the rivalry between them would never disappear. At least, they knew when to unite and why.

"I can't wait to see my kits again !" The dark gray tom whispered to his friend with an excited tone. " I know... Creampelt and Goldenpaw must be missing me... " Firestar said back with equal excitement. He knew that when he will be back, he would be a

father not only to Goldenpaw but to his now born kits. He knew that his Warriors were all excited by the idea of going back home and he couldn't blame them, especially Cloudtail. Brightheart must have gave birth by now.

When the young Skyclan Leader finished his mouse, he quickly looked at the rest of the group who seemed eager to leave (much to his amusement). Then he cleared his throat which caught everyone's attention "Skyclan ! Today... we are going back home !" Cheers and yowls of joy came from his warriors. "Our task here is done ! We can now return to our loved ones ! But first I must tell you that I'm proud of all of you ! You have done a marvelous job during the fight with Bloodclan and I'm proud to be your Leader !"

His small speech caused his Warriors (some of them) to purr in content and delight at the praises. Firestar watched them with a soft smile but then he rose to his paws before lifting his tail " Come on everyone ! A long journey is waiting us !" At those words, the rest of his group : Croweye, Mistfur, Foxclaw, Nightfur , Weaselpelt, Cloudtail, Graystripe, Sootpaw, Darkpaw and Foxpaw along with his beloved aunt and Medicine Cat ,Kestrelfeather followed him as their Leader lead them toward Barley' and Ravenpaw's barn.

As he walked, Firestar could hear the excitement coming from his Clan-mates and he could hear the apprentices chatting with each other "I can't wait to tell everyone about the fight !" Darkpaw was shouting to his friends who looked really excited " Yeah I can't wait to see their faces ! They would be so disappointed to not have been there !" Foxpaw replied back with a hint of amusement in her voice.

Chuckling of the apprentices' antics, Firestar looked back toward their destination and was instantly greeted by his friend Ravenpaw whose eyes brightened when he saw them "Firestar ! Graystripe ! Welcome !" The black tom said as he pressed his head against his long-time friends who purred in content. "We came to say goodbye...We are going home..." Graystripe replied with sadness and Ravenpaw nodded in understanding but , if we looked closely, we could see the same look of sadness that his friends harbored at the moment. "I will miss you all... But I understand that you have to leave..." the black loner inquired sadly and his friends's heart seemed to clench : this might be the last time they would see each

other again.

"When the time will come, we will be reunited in Starclan and we won't leave each other again !" Firestar said in an attempt to comfort his black friend and his words seemed to do the trick because the loner replied in a confident tone "Yes... We will see each other again... But first..." his sad smile turned into a mischievous one as he trotted away toward the river.

Blinking in surprise, Firestar and Graystripe glanced at each other before calling out to their friend whose only response was "Follow me !" The Skyclan Cats looked at each other before running after the loner who led them toward the place they said goodbye moons ago. But when they arrived at the river, they were greeted by a surprised sight.... The Four Clan Leaders of Forest were present and seemed to be waiting for them.

The Leaders were sitting side by side while their Deputies were standing not too far from them. Among them, Firestar recognized the new Leaders of Thunderclan and Shadowclan : Sandstar and Russetstar respectively. The day following the fight with Bloodclan, the two mollies received their nine lives and their names.

Sandstar had chosen Brackenfur , Graystripe's former apprentice, as her Deputy while Russetstar chose Blackfoot. In other time, Firestar would not have approved this choice but Blackfoot had proved that he was loyal and no more the cat who helped Tigerstar and Brokenstar when the two treacherous cats still resided among the livings. There were also three more cats sitting near Sandstar and he recognized them instantly : it was Tawnypaw and Bramblepaw and Willowpelt.

The two of them had passed the last few days together as Tawnypaw didn't changed her mind about leave Thunderclan to join Skyclan. Of course, Bramblepaw tried to dissuade her but it was futile. Goldenflower , despise being saddened by her daughter's decision, had supported her. Willowpelt instantly approached her eldest son before pulling him into a tight hug which he returned. Firestar watched the scene with a sad smile before his attention turned toward someone else.

"Firestar !" Tallstar was the first one to greet the Skycan Leader as

he took a few steps forward. "Tallstar ! What are you all doing here ? Not that we mind it..." Firestar inquired the black and white tom before glancing at his Clan-mates for the last parts. They all shook their heads saying that they didn't mind the company one bit.

It was Leopardstar who responded "We all came here to wish you a good journey home..." "Yes... and we wanted to thank you for helping us when you didn't have too..." Russetstar added as she looked at the Skyclan Cats with gratefulness. Then Sandstar stepped forward , finally speaking " And for that, you are welcome to come back whenever you want !"

The Skyclan Warriors thanked the Leaders for their kindness and Firestar couldn't retain himself as he said those words "We thank you all for this.... We will miss you but our hearts belong to Skyclan... They need us..." The Four Leaders bowed their heads in understanding even if deep down, they wanted them to stay. "May Starclan protect you...." Russetstar inquired softy to the Skyclan Cats who nodded their heads before looking over at their Leader who raised his tail before saying " Skyclan ! Let's go !"

He was the first one to walk away but not before giving a soft farewells to his friends and allies who returned it repsectfully. He was quickly followed by Graystripe (who just said goodbye to his mother one last time) and the rest of his troop.

However, the bright-flame colored tom didn't get far because he turned his head to look at a certain tortoiseshell apprentice "It is time Tawnypaw..." The apprentice in question sighed and she and her brother embraced each other for the last time before the tortoiseshell and white molly walked after her new Leader who gave her a comforting smile which seemed to calm her down a bit.

Then Firestar glanced at Ravenpaw and Barley who were standing not too far away before whispering loud enough for the two to hear "See you in Starclan..." The two Loners nodded their heads and they all watched in sadness as the Skyclan Cats slowly disappeared out of sight. The Four Leaders, along with their Deputies watched the departure of their allies in silence. Bramblepaw watched his sister

with a heavy heart as he whispered softy "I will miss you Tawnypaw... May you find happiness in Skyclan..."

Sandstar , who had heard him, pulled the apprentice in a gentle embrace which he gratefully accepted. Then the new Thunderclan Leader looked back at the disappearing form of Firestar with the same look of longing she harbored each time she looked at him *" I wish things were different... Maybe in another life... "* she thought to herself before she and the others Cats returned back to their own territories in silence.

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(Some days later...)

Firestar took a deep breath as he and his comrades finally reached the familiar scent of their territory. The tiredness they all had instantly vanished as they all took a sprint toward the gorge where they could see the rest of their Clans who were busy doing what they usually do.

At the edge of the gorge, Firestar glanced at his group who looked back at him expectantly : they were waiting for him to do something. Tawnypaw for her part was looking at the Gorge with wide eyes of shock and amazement. Smiling, the Skyclan Leader yowled as loud as he could and his cry caught the attention of the cats residing in the gorge. All of them looked at the newcomers with joy in their faces and eyes.

"THEY ARE BACK !" someone shouted through the slowly gathering crowd as Firestar and his group made their ways down the walls to enter the camp. They were instantly greeted by the whole Clan who embraced them happily. The air was filled with purrs of delight and joy. "DAD!" a familiar voice called out and Firestar had just the time to see a pale yellow figure ramming into him, pinning him down.

Firestar laughed as he recognized who did it and he nuzzled her with affection and joy "Goldenpaw ! You've grown to much !" he remarked as she stepped backward. Indeed, Goldenpaw was now as tall as him and at this rate she would have the same size as her mother. "I missed you so much Dad~" the she-apprentice inquired

as she nuzzled her adoptive father with a content purr.

As he embraced his daughter, Firestar's green eyes glanced around : Graystripe was embracing Featherpaw and Stormpaw while the rest of his group were receiving attention from the rest of the Clan. Tawnypaw was making herself small as some were looking at her with curiosity but Weaselpelt was near her and in fact, seemed to be comforting her. But then his attention turned away from them when "FIRESTAR !" a duo of voices called out through the crowd who stepped aside to reveal two familiar mollies who instantly rushed to the young Leader's side.

A purr escaped Firestar's throat as the newcomers pressed their bodies against him, purring loudly with affection. The two were none other than his mothers Russetpelt and Brownleaf. " My son... We missed you so much~" the first one cooed motherly as she licked his face fondly. Brownleaf, for her part, didn't said anything as she was too busy cuddling her son.

Firestar then noticed something strange and looked at his mothers and adoptive daughter "Where is Creampelt ?" The look they were giving him was causing him to have butterflies in his heart "Did she-" "FIRESTAR !" a new voice called out and everyone turned their heads too see Creampelt stepping out of the Nursery, her sky blue eyes locked on the young Leader with an expression of pure joy.

"Creampelt !" he shouted in happiness as the two rushed toward each other before sharing a big embrace. Creampelt licked the head of her mate repeatedly and in response, he nuzzled the underside of her jaws. "Oh Firestar... You came back~" "I promised to didn't I ?" he replied with a fond smile which caused her to purr loudlier in content. But then he noticed that her belly was far smaller than the last time he saw her, and the bright-flame colored tom glanced up at her with a hopeful expression on his face.

He didn't have the time to ask his question because she instantly said in a fond tone "Come there are some kits who would love to see you my love~" Firestar glanced behind him before saying "Nightfur ! You and Graystripe tell everyone about our mission... I have some business to take care of..." The two in question nodded their heads and instantly , they were surrounded by curious cats who asked

them questions after questions.

Firestar ignored them as he followed after Creampelt who re-entered the Nursery before leading him toward the back section of the cave where her nest was. "MAMA !" some voices called out and instantly, four little fur-balls, barely older than 1 moon old rushed toward Creampelt who licked their heads one by one before saying "Kits there is someone who want to see you~" "Who mama ?" one of them, a little molly, asked her with curiosity. "Your father~" Creampelt responded with a fond smile as she looked over at Firestar whose eyes were locked on the kits.

The kits looked back at him with wide eyes of shock before approaching him cautiously. The young Leader got a good look of the kits : there were three mollies and a tom. The first molly looked perfectly like him except she had the sky blue eyes of Creampelt. The second molly had a dark ginger (almost brown) fur, a white underbelly, paws and muzzle. The tip of her tail was also white and her eyes were blue but darker than the precedent.

The third kit was a tortoiseshell molly with white paws, underbelly and muzzle. Her eyes were emerald like him. She also seemed bigger than the other two so it was easy to understand that she would inherit Creampelt's big size. The last kit and the only tom of the four had the same cream-furred pelt than his mother except than he had a white muzzle, underbelly and paws. He also got some stripes-like marks on his legs and face. In addition, he got the emerald green eyes of his father. Like the precedent kit, the tom seemed bigger than the rest of the litter.

"Are you really our daddy ?" the red kit asked him with curiosity and her sisters and brother looked at him expectantly. Firestar lowered his head down as some tears could be seen falling from his eyes "Yes... Yes I am your daddy~" he managed to say as he looked at the fur little ones in front of him with pure fatherly love. Squeals of joy escaped from their throats as they pounced on him, pinning him down. Firestar couldn't stop laughing as he looked at the kits... his kits with nothing but pure affection.

Then he looked back at Creampelt before asking "What are their names ?" Creampelt purred as she used her tail to point each kit

"The one like you is Flamekit... The dark ginger one is Redkit... The tortoiseshell is Leafkit... and the tom is Bravekit~" Firestar looked at his kits before inquiring a soft tone " They are so beautiful... I wish I was there when..." he was interrupted by Creampelt who pressed a paw against his mouth, silencing him.

"Its not your fault... I don't blame you... I would NEVER blame you... I love you too much~" the large cream furred molly purred as she licked his face lovingly "And I love you too... all of you~" he said the last words to his kits who purred loudly in delight as they pressed their small bodies against his, cuddling him. "I am home and I don't plan to leave anytime soon~" he added to the love of his life who pressed her head against his, purring.

Firestar closed his eyes as he let the warmth of his family's love surrounding him. He was now perfectly content with what he had now and he wouldn't trade it for anything else. With the menace of Tigerstar and Bloodclan out of the picture, the bright-flame colored tom could now finally live in peace with his family and Clan and those for the rest of his life.

(To be contined..)

Note : the story is almost done ! Thank you for supporting 'SKYCLAN'S FIRE' so far ! Here the pictures of Firestar' and Creampelt's kits :

- respectively : Flamekit, Redkit, Leafkit, Bravekit.

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Epilogue

Firestar was sitting on the Rock-pile, watching his Clan as they went back and forth in the camp while doing their business. The Skyclan Leader was no more the strong young cat he was... He was now old... and he knew that sooner he will join Starclan and hunt with them forever. He was now the last one of his generation as his longtime friend Graystripe died a week ago of old age. His own mate, Creampelt had died but not of age... but to an illness.

He remembered the moment she left him to join their Warrior Ancestors and he couldn't wait to see her again as he missed her deeply. His mother, Brownleaf and Russetpelt also died a long time ago... His kits had grown considerably and were now proud Warriors of Skyclan : Flamekit became Flamefeather ; Redkit became Redfur ; Leafkit became Leafpelt and his son Bravekit became Braveheart.

All four of them had a family of their own and he was really proud of them. In addition, Goldenpaw, his beloved adoptive daughter, had received her Warrior Name 2 moons after he and his group returned from their Mission in the Forest Territories. She was now known as Goldendawn and she later became mate with Sootpelt (previously Sootpaw). Like her younger siblings, the pale yellow molly founded a family of her own.

Now ,many seasons later, Firestar was weaker that what he was before but he was still the wise Leader Skyclan grew to respect and love. His family loved him dearly and his great-kits adored him... He had what he always wanted and felt a pang of sadness at the mere idea of leaving them behind.

Something that surprised him was Tawnypaw. The former Thunderclan Apprentice grew accustomed to her life the among Skyclan Cats and formed a strong bond with his son Braveheart... to the point that the two became mate. She received the name Tawnypelt at the same time that Goldendawn.

Feathertail and Stormfur , Graystripe's kits, also founded a family on their own with Whitecloud and Nightfall respectively. Cloudtail and Brightheart had both joined the Elders a few moons ago as they were starting to feel their ages. Nightfur, his first Deputy, had died 8 moons after the fight with Bloodclan and he chose Addereye who lasted many seasons before ultimately joining the elders (he later died in his sleep).

5 moons ago, Firestar chose his son Braveheart as the new Deputy and surprisingly, no one protested as the young tom was loved and respected by everyone. Back to present, the calm atmosphere was soon broken by an evil laugh which echoed in the camp. All Cats looked at the top of the gorge to see a large dark brown tabby tom with amber eyes. But what surprised them all was that he had a dark aura around him and he almost looked transparent.

Regardless, Firestar looked at the tom with horror as his shocked face turned into one of disgust and rage "TIGERSTAR !" he shouted out loudly which caused everyone present to look at him with disbelief. "*Firestar !"* his nemesis hissed back, showing him in this simply world, all the hatred he had toward the bright-flame colored tom.

" How can you be here ? Scourge killed you !" Firestar asked him with narrowed eyes as he went back to stood on his full size , glaring daggers at his enemy. "He did ! And Starclan sent me in the Dark Forest for my 'crimes' ! I swore to get my revenge on you and now the time as come for me to end you... once and fall all !" The dark brown tabby tom explained with a sneer as he jumped into the camp.

He was instantly surrounded by the whole Clan who all snarled at him. "If you want our Leader ! You will have to go through us first !" Flamefeather hissed at the newcomer and yowls of agreement echoed behind her. Her siblings stood at her side , glaring daggers at the tabby. Braveheart was as big as Tigerstar and was about to challenge him in combat but was interrupted by his father who came closer "Everyone step aside ! This is between him and me !" around him the Cats protested but ,after seeing that their Leader wouldn't back down, they reluctantly obeyed and stepped backward.

"Look at you Firestar... You are so pathetic... All weak and old..." Tigerstar taunted him with an evil sneer as the two circled each other. The rest of Skyclan had formed a circle around the two fighters and were all growling at the dark brown tabby with pure hatred and anger but could do nothing "At least I'm not a bloodthirsty murderer and a tyran !" Firestar retorted with a hiss as he glared at his long-time enemy.

"Tsk... I am a better leader that you could ever be !" Tigerstar snarled back hauntingly and we could hear some of the Skyclan Warriors snickering with amusement. Thankfully, the treacherous tom seemed to not have heard them as his amber eyes were locked on Firestar who retorted back defiantly " A real Leader don't send his Warriors to their deaths !"

" A real Warriors LOVES battles ! If they don't then they are not worthy to be called Warriors !" Tigerstar replied with a growl as he unsheathed his unusual long sharp claws. " How many cats must die to satisfy for bloodlust ?" Firestar asked him with a growlof his own " I only have to defeat you... Then I can pick on your Clan-mates one by one... moon after moon... So there is no...one...LEFT ! After this, I will get my revenge of the other Clans !" those words seemed to enrage Firestar who instanly hissed in anger " I won't let you hurt my Clan-mates ! Not now not ever !"

Hearing this, the Skyclan Cats , especially the youngest ones, looked at their Leader with nothing but pure adoration and amazement. Tigerstar , for his part, grinned maliciously as he looked at his nemesis " Then you are going to have to kill me !" Knowing that the fight was impossible to avoid, Firestar went into a defensive position while asking "Has it all been worth Tigerstar ? All the hate... all the death ?!"

Tigerstar fixed his long-time enemy with an evil grin as he said those words who shocked the cats present (minus Firestar) to their core " Every... MOMENT !" then the large tom pounced on the bright-flame colored tom. The attack was so fast that Firestar found himself pinned down on the ground with a clawed paw on his chest.

He glared up at his enemy who was standing above him with a glare full of hatred " The moment Bluestar found you... I became

NOTHING ! I should have killed you that day ! But now... I won't make that same mistake !" The moment the ghostly dark brown tom said those words, Firestar pushed him away with his hind-legs.

Tigerstar landed on the ground before looking back at his enemy angrily and hissing with a maniacal crackle "When you are gone... I will kill everyone you care and there is nothing you can do !" Then he attacked again and he clawed Firestar on his side causing him to hiss in pain "FATHER !" Goldendawn and her siblings shouted as they darted forward to help their father only to be stopped by Cloudtail and Brightheart. "Don't move ! Its Firestar's fight !" the old long-white furred Warrior said to the younger cats before looking back at his uncle who was fighting against Tigerstar.

To everyone's horror, Tigerstar delivered a terrible blow which sent their beloved leader flying away before crashing hard on the ground. His flame pelt was covered in injuries and some of them were deep as blood flooded through them. They waited for a second and nothing happened as Firestar wasn't moving. "Pathetic ! I shouldn't have expected more from a *filthy kittypet* ! But now you are dead ! Good riddance ! " Tigerstar snarled out before turning around in disgust.

Braveheart looked at the body of his father with horror before glaring at the dark brown tabby tom with hatred and rage. He was about to say something when a grunt was heard and all of cats , including Tigerstar, turned their heads to see Firestar slowly getting up, gritting his teeth as he fought against the pain he was enduring.

"I would not die... Not until my Clan is safe from YOU !" Firestar snarled out as he pounced on his long-time enemy. Twisting in midair, the Skyclan Leader landed inches away from Tigerstar's side and ,before his enemy could defend himself, Firestar smashed his paws right into the tabby's side. Tigerstar yowled in pain as he fell on his side (the one which wasn't injured). Without giving him a second to recover, Firestar slashed his claws onto Tigerstar's head repeatedly.

The attack was so vicious that it left all spectators in shock. The young ones were particularly amazed that their Leader , who was old enough to be an Elder, could fight so well against an enemy

bigger than himself. Firestar ignored his Clan-mates as he delivered a powerful blow which sent Tigerstar flying against the Rock-Pile.

Dazed, Tigerstar desperately tried to get back up as Firestar approached him " You threatened my Clan-mates Tigerstar... My family... You killed innocents for nothing but power... No more... Not under my watch..." Then as fast as wind, the Skyclan Leader leaped across the clearing, flying right at Tigerstar before sinking his fangs deep into his nemesis' neck. Firestar tightened his grip on while Tigerstar thrashed madly, trying to escape before suddenly going still.

Tigerstar stopped moving... He wasn't even breathing... Firestar hold his grip for a moment before opening his jaws, releasing Tigerstar who fell on the ground with a soft 'THUMP'. Then the bright-flame colored tom watched as his long-time enemy's body disappeared in thin air, leaving only a blood soaked ground which was the only thing that could confirm that he was there.

Firestar stood there, looking at where Tigerstar fell. He had won... He was victorious. Tigerstar was gone once and for all. He had won against the cat who had been considered as the strongest Warrior in the Forest Territories. Then the Skyclan Leader looked at his Clan-mates who all seemed overjoyed by his victory and he smiled at them when they started to cheer for him.

Suddenly, his vision began to blurr as a feeling of weakness started to surround him. He fell to his side and this caused the whole Clan to gasp in horror as they rushed at his side. "Father !" Goldendawn called out as she stood near Firestar's head with wide eyes full of concern and horror. " SPOTFUR! LEAFPELT !" Flamefeather called for the Medicine Cats who instantly went to their leader's side. Leafpelt, one of Firestar's daughters, chose to become a Medicine Cat as you have noticed.

"Will he be alright ?" Redfur asked the two mollies who were examining their patient with a voice full of concern for her father. Everyone watched at the two Medicine Cats turned their heads to face them with a look of pure sadness "He is on his way to Starclan..." Leafpelt responded with a broken tone as she pressed her head against her father's with tearful eyes.

"NO !" Braveheart yelled out as he approached his father whose breaths were becoming more and more deeper "Hold on father ! We will save you..." "No... Its over... I will join our ancestors... But I have no regrets..." Firestar began to say before his green eyes looked back and forth between his kits who were looking back at him with nothing but horror and sadness. " I am...so proud... of you... Take care of each other... I will watch you all from Starclan..." Firestar managed to say between deep breaths before adding with a soft smile " My greatest pride as a Leader... was to have... kits like you... I love you all..."

" We love you too... Dad..." Goldendawn, Flamefeather, Braveheart, Redfur and Leafpelt said at the same time with broken voices. With a smile, Firestar closed his eyes as he expired for the last time before going completely still. He was gone. Around the dead body, the whole Clan began to mourn for their beloved Leader who they cherished dearly. Firestar's kits were more infected by his lost as they pressed their bodies against each other while crying for the lost of their father who just gave his life to protect them all.

Then Cloudtail raised his head to say in a loud tone " Firestar was a noble Leader... Maybe the Greatest Skyclan had ever knew... He was like a father for many cats... No one could replace him... May you find peace with our Warrior Ancestors... Firestar... The Fire of Skyclan..." One by one, the Cats of Starclan began to pay their respect to their fallen Leader.

Speaking of Firestar, he was now cuddling with Creampelt who was one of the first Starclan Cats to greet him. The others were Graystripe, Bluestar, Dovestar and Ravenpaw (who died of sickness moons ago). He even found his mothers Brownleaf and Russetpelt who welcomed him in Starclan and , to his shock, he found his adoptive mother and sister, Nutmeg and Princess respectively who were overjoyed to see him again.

Spottedleaf, Firestar's first love, was also among the Cats who welcomed him and she and Creampelt agreed to share him (much to his shock) since the two of them loved him. Later he was among the cats who gave a life to Braveheart (the life of courage and loyalty) and he promised to his son to watch over them for eternity. Firestar was now reunited with the ones he loved and one day, his

kits and great-kits would join him... He had a long and peaceful life and will now enjoy his time in Starclan until oblivion.

The end